



IOWA BEEKEEPING INFORMATION
Iowa Dept of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
Office of the State Apiarist
Iowa Laboratory Facility
2230 South Ankeny Blvd.
Ankeny, IA 50023

Disinfecting Woodenware For AFB Eradication

Viable American Foulbrood (AFB) spores remain in comb and woodenware for decades. Destruction of entire frames, comb, and boxes by fire is the safest method of killing the spores and preventing further infection of colonies.

Comb and bees must not be salvaged from diseased colonies.

For those wishing to save their contaminated woodenware from destruction, there are a few methods of killing the AFB spores from the woodenware surfaces.

The inside surfaces of the woodenware can be scorched by fire. This can be done with a propane torch, completely blackening the surface so that all wax and propolis is removed. This can also be accomplished by “painting” the surfaces of the boxes with kerosene, stacking the boxes, and setting them alight. When surfaces are significantly charred, the flame should be smothered by covering the top of the stack of boxes.

Boiling woodenware in lye water for 15 minutes (1 can of lye per 5 gallons of water) can disinfect boxes and scraped frames. This can be accomplished by bringing a barrel of lye water to a boil and submerging the woodenware for the full duration of time.

Finally, beekeepers in some locations may have access to ethylene oxide fumigation or irradiation facilities.

If you have any questions about disease symptoms or how to treat for diseases please contact the State Apiarist’s office.

(515) 725-1481 andrew.joseph@iowaAgriculture.gov

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