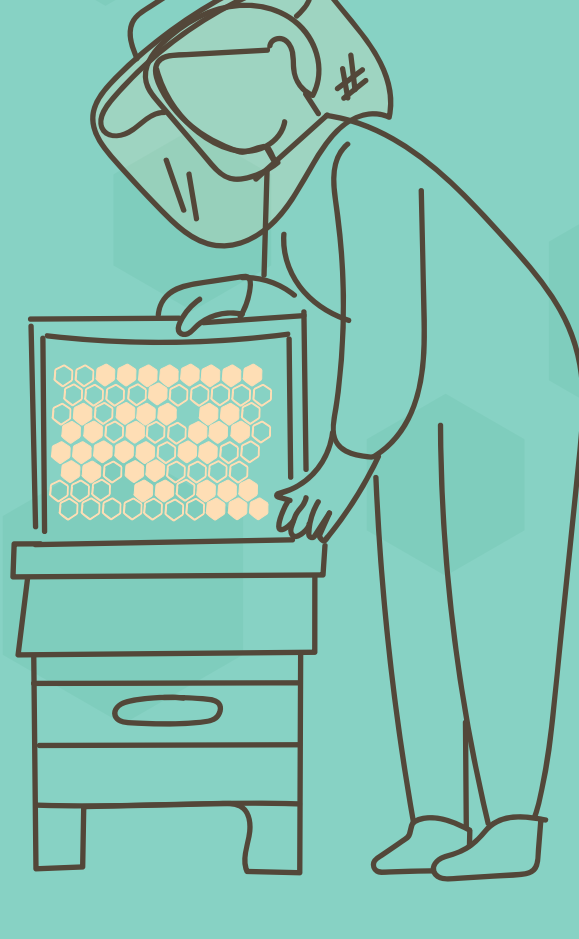


Processing beeswax – from removing old combs to production of new wax foundations

The management of the beeswax is essential to guarantee suitable combs and for beeswax production. The oldest or unsuitable combs (too dark, damaged, broken, mouldy, etc.) can be removed in autumn or early spring when they are empty. The new ones have to be added during the spring development. The old combs can be melted to produce beeswax for sale or for the new sheets of wax foundations.



step 1

Removal of old combs is crucial for the health of your colony.

It minimises infection and keeps hygienic conditions. Combs should always be removed and replaced if necessary, best during spring or autumn. Adding empty frames or frames with new foundations, especially early in the year, gives your bees a good, healthy start into the new season and supports their "building behaviour".



step 2

Which combs to remove:

- Old, dark brood combs.
- Wax moth infected combs.
- All combs that show signs of fungi (mould) or bacteria (this may appear especially after long rainy periods or in small colonies during or after winter).



step 3

Extract the wax from the comb in a sun – or hot – steam wax melter, whichever is available to you. This kills pathogens and cleans the wax.

You can work with an "open" or "closed" wax circulation:

- open: no old wax gets back into the colony. In organic beekeeping you may only use "fresh" wax from uncapping honey or newly build combs, for example, drone frames.
- closed: all kinds of wax is reused for foundations. Easier but especially critical if you use chemical acarizids. Residues can build up over years and slowly poison your colony.



step 4

Filter the liquid wax through a wax mesh.

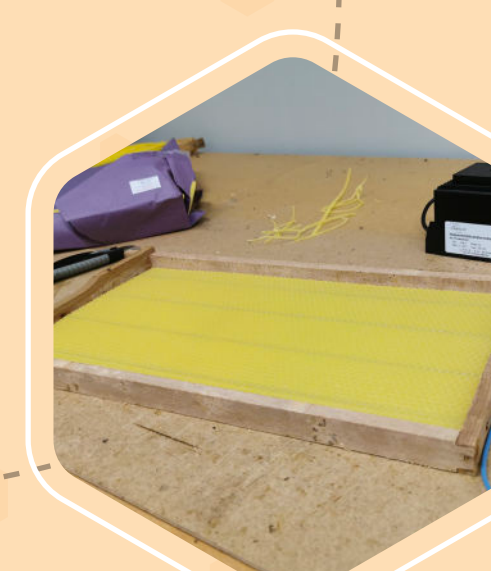
Repeat this step if there are many residues. Several times if necessary.



step 5

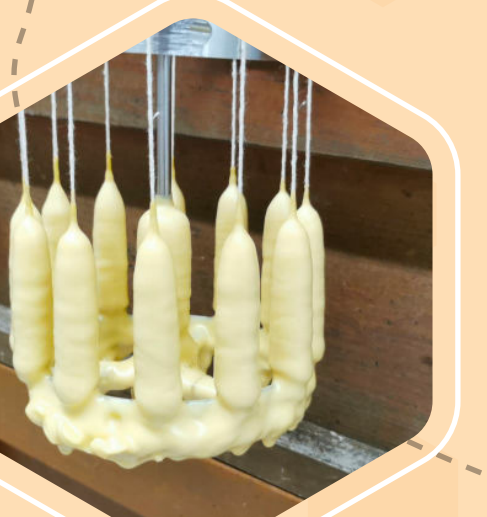
If you reuse the wax, for new foundations, always be sure that it is free from any contamination and chemical residues.

You will always be on the safe side by using your own wax from a healthy colony with no chemical treatment.



step 6

If you own a foundation roller or press, you can make your own foundation for the next year. Otherwise, you can send it to a wax expert of your trust to make them for you.



step 7

If not for your foundations, you can use the filtered wax for many other purposes to your liking: candles, cosmetics, to name just a few. It is a precious substance.

That said, if you don't use it for yourself, wax free from chemical residues can be sold at high prices.

