

# HoneybeeLives

## **BEE TEA**

This Tea helps strengthen the Bees immune system. The water/sugar mixture listed below is for the Fall. In the Spring and Summer make the mixture 50/50 water/ sugar. **Please use only “Pure Cane” Sugar.** If the bag doesn't say “Cane” it is probably Beet Sugar, which is known to be hard for bees to digest, and can cause diarrhea. Honey B Healthy, an essential oil supplement - including lemongrass and spearmint, is a wonderful addition to the tea for occasional use, to encourage a healthy mid-gut in your bees. Add only after tea has cooled.

### **Ingredients:**

2 Parts Water

3 Parts Sugar – (Have 10% or more of the “sugar” be Honey if you can.)

Dried Thyme - Tsp. or more depending on volume (a reduction of Varroa Mites has been noted using thyme)

DASH or two of Salt

Herbal Tea, see instructions below:

Chamomile Tea - Organic if you can find it

Dandelion Root Tea - you can find it at most Health Food stores.

(You can add other herbs like sage, rue, yarrow, peppermint, hyssop, anise hyssop, stinging nettle, lemon balm, however **don't make it so strong that it fumes your bees** – this should end up homeopathic in strength.)

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### **To Make Bee Tea:**

Add dash of salt and the dried Thyme to water in pot. Heat water to full boil, for at least two minutes of full boil (water will take on an amber color with Thyme). Turn off heat, and add Sugar - never boil sugar. Stir well until dissolved, first in one direction then the other.

Add herbal tea (see below)

If you add Honey, do so after temperature has come down to luke-warm, stirring well.

Let cool enough to handle, and store tea in glass containers in a cool place until use.

### **Make Herbal Tea Separately:**

Make Chamomile and Dandelion Root Tea (one bag each), or any other of the dried herbs you are using, with thyme sprinkled in. Make tea by putting ingredients in large cup (ours is 20 oz), add boiling water, steep covered for ten minutes.

One large cup of herb tea is enough for approx 8 gallons of Bee Tea (that's about 4 - 5 tablespoons per gallon of Bee Tea), so add amount according to the volume of Bee Tea you are making. You can freeze left over Herb Tea in ice cube trays, storing in plastic bag in freezer for the next batches.

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The Bee Tea should have a clear (not muddy), amber appearance, with floating thyme leaves.

The Bee Tea goes in Mason Jars w/ lids that come w/ Boardman or Cypress Feeders. You can also use your own lids, making tiny pin-holes, using a nail and hammer, although size of hole is critical. Thyme floating in tea is just fine, and will not keep bees from tea as it settles. Bees can still access the Bee Tea thru thyme.

Note how fast bees consume the tea. If they don't empty jars for a few days (3 or more), then they probably don't need it. Only feed bees when they need it. Do not feed Bee Tea in cold months, switch to Winter Bee Candy or an alternative that doesn't have high moisture content. Also, check tea during warm / hot weather to make sure it does not ferment. Keep Bee Tea vessels clean. If you notice mold or cloudiness clean jars before reusing.