Cotswold Seeds Ltd
The Cotswold Business Village
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NewBees



Chris Wells has been at Honeydale today settling his bees into their new hives. He brought five colonies in nuc boxes last week and let them acclimatise to their new surroundings before installing the hives. Now the hives have been built, the frames have been successfully transferred from the nuc boxes and the bees have been given a supply of sugar syrup to tide them over until they have built up their own supply of honey. They've already been making good use of the abundance of wildflowers at Honeydale. Several of the females were spotted returning with pollen sacks filled with bright yellow pollen and there is an abundance of distinctive black pollen on the frames too, showing that the bees are foraging on poppies. Chris found queens in four of the five boxes and the fifth is displaying plenty of brood, so all is good. The hives will be left alone until next week when Chris will come back to check progress.

We also carried out an inspection on our own two hives. You may remember in the last update that Hive 1, although producing a good amount of honey, was missing it's queen and we could not identify any eggs, however the bees were behaving quite calmly, and were polishing brood cells, suggesting there was a queen somewhere soon to be fertilised. The great news is that we have found freshly laid eggs meaning there must be a queen present and she most likely has only recently returned from her mating flights and started laying. As soon as we found the eggs (after celebrating a little) we closed the hive - we'll let her carry on laying eggs for now and mark her with a white dot next inspection. In hive 2, the newly marked queen has continued to lay eggs, there is a great brood pattern on many of the frames and things are looking great. Things are looking less hopeful for our swarm box which has no brood, indicating that there's no queen present and the box is likely to be vacated eventually. We are considering starting a new colony from these bees by introducing a new queen.

Looking forward to next week's inspection when Chris's Cotswold Bees should have started to feel at home. We're now delighted to have seven beehives at Honeydale Farm.

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