

Tim Moore's Winter Brick Recipe

10/16/23

Granulated White Sugar	Water	Distilled White Vinegar	Yield 4 lb. bricks
100 lbs.	2 gal.	8 tablespoons (1/2 cup)	25-27
50 lbs.	1 gal.	4 tablespoons (1/4 cup)	12-13
25 lbs.	.5 gal.	2 tablespoons	6-7
10 lbs.	25.5 oz.	1 tablespoon	2.5
5 lbs.	12.8 oz.	2 teaspoons	1.25
4 lb.	10.25 oz.	2 teaspoons	1

CAUTION: Handling hot sugar solution is very dangerous. Make sure there is ample headroom in the pan you use as the possibility of the solution boiling over is very real.

Add hot water from the tap and bring to a near boil/boil. Slowly dissolve all the sugar into a solution while applying high heat. **Continuously stir** until the solution comes to a boil. CAUTION: As the solution comes to a temperature just before boiling, foaming will occur. YOU MUST REDUCE THE TEMPERATURE while continuing to stir to move the solution through the boiling point and beyond. Once the solution is well above 212 degrees, the risk of boiling-over lessons and the foaming dissipates. Continue boiling the mixture until the solution reaches a temperature of 245-250 degrees. 245 degrees will result in a softer brick, 250 degrees will result in a harder brick. I like something in the middle of that range.

It will take some practice to recognize the point where the solution goes from a boiling sugar water solution to a bee-candy making material.

In my opinion, do not add any additives as these seem to increase the tendency of the solution to foam more and scorch. If you want to mix in a little Honey-B-Healthy, stir it in as the solution is cooling only.

Once the mixture has reached the desired temperature, remove heat and let the mixture cool to around 175 – 200 degrees. Stir air and any sugar around the edges of the pot to make it cloudy in appearance. Occasionally stir the mixture during the cooling cycle to keep the mixture at the same temperature throughout. Pour the mixture into molds and let cool overnight. I use disposable aluminum trays as my molds.

When you are all done, the bricks should be a creamy-white looking color. A slight amber color means you left the solution at too high a temperature for too long a period. You probably added too much water. You want to move the process through the candy making process as quickly as possible. Even though it may be a slightly amber, you should still be able to use it on your bees but try to improve your technique the next time you try. It will take practice to get consistent results. Do not use it if you scorch the sugar.

For taking temperatures of the solution during the process, I use an infrared thermometer purchased from Harbor Freight. I found the mercury-type candy thermometers difficult to use but did it that way for years.

From start to finish, it takes about 2-3 hours to make a 100 lb. batch of sugar bricks. It takes about an hour to make a 10-pound batch.

For the normal cluster size of over-wintering bees, a 4-pound sugar brick provides enough food for approximately one month.

Store the bricks in the mold until ready for use. Flip the bricks upside down and place them over the bee cluster when in use.