

General Meeting

Monday, December 12, 2022 (7:00 p.m.) (via Zoom)

Main Program: Propolis - Good for Bees AND Humans

presented by **Cindy Hodges**,

EAS & Georgia Master Beekeeper. Cindy owns a small beekeeping operation in Dunwoody, Georgia, with her husband. While working toward her Master Craftsman certification, the program's highest level of expertise, her research focused on resins — called propolis — that bees collect that have immune-strengthening properties against bee diseases. Her work was published as a scientific note in the *Journal of Economic Entomology*.

These recipes are all from other folks

Propolis Infused Oil

Here's the recipe we use for **Propolis Oil**:

- .3 oz. or 10 grams propolis (about 1 TBS)
- 6.7 fl oz. or 200 ml olive oil (any healthy vegetable oil is okay to use)
- (We made a big batch, so we used 2.25 oz. (7 1/2 TBS) raw propolis and 50 fl. oz. olive oil)

Heated Method

Mix the propolis and olive oil together in the top of a double boiler. (small sauce pot in a larger pot partly filled with water) This helps control the temperature of the oil, which you do not want to get too hot. This would destroy the beneficial properties of the propolis. Use a candy thermometer to monitor the temperature and heat the oil to no higher than 122 degrees F. Stir and heat for about 10 minutes. (or longer if you wish). The propolis will not all dissolve.

Strain this mixture through cheesecloth (coarser, so faster, but might require a second straining) or a paper coffee filter (finer, so slower, but you end up with a cleaner oil). The propolis that remains in the filter can be used again to make more oil! (freeze it for another time) Store it in a sealed jar in a dark place.

2 Week Unheated Method

Mix the same quantities/ratio of oil and propolis as above in a container with a sealing lid. We use canning jars. Shake up and store in a dark place. Shake 2-3 times a day, for 2 weeks. Then proceed as above, to strain.

Propolis Tincture

With **Propolis Tincture** you can get a more exact percentage, as the propolis dissolves more completely in alcohol. It is important to use weight measurements rather than volume for this mixture. It is recommended that you not try to make anything stronger than a 30% solution, as it is harder to get that much propolis to dissolve. We usually make a 10% solution. Then, after it is done infusing, if we want it stronger, we evaporate the alcohol down by half to make it 20%.

For a 10% tincture,

- mix 1 part propolis by weight to
- 9 parts grain alcohol, by weight (we use 75 proof or higher vodka, or Everclear) Do not use ethanol alcohol – it is poisonous!

Mix together in a lidded container (again, we use canning jars). Shake. Store in a dark place. Shake 2-3 times a day for 1-2 weeks. Then strain the same way as described above for the oil. Store in a dark place or in a dark jar. Propolis left in filter material may be reused for another tincture or oil. Use again or freeze for later.

We put our propolis oil and tincture in amber dropper bottles and store in our medicine and kitchen cabinets.

****Cindy:** We keep all propolis products in the fridge or freezer to maintain the benefits of its properties. You can even use water to make a tincture if you don't want alcohol in it. The process just takes longer to achieve the tincture.

My husband uses Everclear to dissolve the scrapings or propolis trap bits of propolis. He fills an empty (dark glass) bottle with the propolis/wax chunks. It works more quickly if you grind/pulverize the big chunks-a coffee grinder works well for this, but you won't be able to ground coffee after you use it for this! Then he fills the jar with the Everclear, shakes it several times a day for several weeks, and keeps it refrigerated. Then, if we make more than we need immediately, we freeze the extra tincture.

As a reminder, this is not a delicious drink; it is used as to prevent or aid with health issues, and it taste as such. Officially, I cannot promote it for medical use. However, it can stop a sore throat in its tracks, in my opinion. It actually coats your throat (temporarily) and relieves the pain. When I am sick, I gargle with it. A little goes a long way, and it does not taste good!