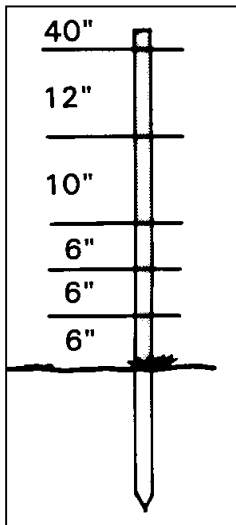
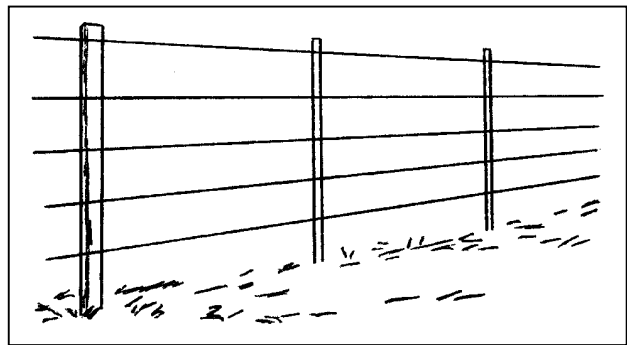


ELECTRIC FENCING OF BEE YARDS FOR BEAR CONTROL

Electric fencing of wild and domestic animals has been the subject of much study and sometimes disagreement in recent years. A paper entitled "High Tensile Wire Fencing Design, Construction and Use" given to the American Society of Agricultural Engineers in 1987 is available from Max-Flex Fence and discusses design and construction details. However, fencing for bears has not become common and no standard designs have evolved.

In fact, wildlife fences often vary greatly in design even for controlling the same animal. The West Virginia Department of Natural Resources reportedly recommended a 2 wire electric fence with strands at 3" and 15" above ground. A fence dealer in Alabama who is also a large honey producer and Dadant bee equipment distributor reports that 8 to 10 strand high tensile electric fences are used on large and remote bee yards in northern Florida. Another West Virginian who has fenced deer, beaver, and bear says that 2 strands of portable Hot Strand works sometimes but bears also run through it sometimes.

MAX-FLEX Fence recommends a 4 or 5 strand high tensile electric fence for permanent bee stand protection using the same specifications as sheep fence. The best portable and temporary choice is FAST FENCE™ electric net. Both fences may benefit from using a "chicken wire" apron around the outside to positively "ground" the bears and insure a good shock.



The permanent fence should give good protection, suffer little if any damage from bears, and be very long lasting. However, the energizer must be operating correctly at all times.

The portable fence will be subject to damage while bears are being trained to it and will therefore require closer supervision. However, it is easily repaired or moved from site to site. Several hundred portable fences of this type are in regular use in the state of Maine.

Baiting electric fences with attractive objects, odors, or foods very much improves their performance, especially during the training period. Use strips of aluminum foil smeared with peanut butter, strips of bacon, or rags soaked in honey to attract animals to the fence for a head shock that will make them retreat and to teach them a lesson that is not easily forgotten. Honey or bacon fat can even be poured directly onto the hot tape. Baiting is most important for portable fences and helps on permanent ones too. It is best to repeat training every year on wildlife fences.

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