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Sugar Roll Method For Monitoring Varroa Mites

Supplies:

Dish pan

Wide mouth Mason jar with cap fitted with 1/8" hardware cloth

2 tablespoons powdered sugar

White plate

Small amount of water or spray bottle

1. Find your queen and set aside in a bee brief or nuc box so you don't accidentally get her in the sugar roll.
2. Take a frame of bees from the brood chamber. For a true representative sample, take bees from 3 different frames. 2 ways:
 - a. Shake the bees into a pan where the bees can be scooped up with a ½ cup = approx. 300 bees.
 - b. Gently run the mason jar over the surface of the bees so that they fall into the mason jar.
3. With bees in the mason jar put on the cover with hardware cloth
4. Add 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar
5. Roll gently for 1 minute
6. Set in the shade for 2 minutes
7. Shake the sugar and mites out of the jar onto a white plate or the empty dish pan.
8. Add water or spray the sugar which dissolves the sugar and make it easy to see the mites.
9. Count the mites. Divide by 3. Infection rate is # of mites per 100 bees.

The bees in the jar can be put back on the inner cover.

The significance of the # of mites varies from spring to fall. The current recommendation is to treat in the spring for 2 mites per 100 bees and in the fall for 3 mites per 100 bees. We have found that all hives need to be treated for Varroa in the fall.