

# TOOLS FOR VARROA MANAGEMENT

## A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE VARROA SAMPLING & CONTROL

HEALTHY BEES · HEALTHY PEOPLE · HEALTHY PLANET™



**HONEY BEE  
HEALTH  
COALITION™**

First Edition 2015

Revised September 17, 2015

Copyright © 2015 The Keystone Policy Center on behalf of The Honey Bee Health Coalition

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. The Honey Bee Health Coalition offers this Guide free of charge, and permits others to duplicate and distribute it. You may not use the material for commercial purposes. If you distribute the Guide, please give appropriate credit to the Coalition as its author. We encourage readers to distribute it to beekeepers and anyone else who can benefit from it.

## Population Decrease

Post-honey harvest; bee population decreasing; colonies rearing overwintering bees. Varroa mite populations growing, peaking, and then declining until eventually only phoretic mites on adult bees after colonies become broodless

### Highly Effective Options:

- Apivar®
- MAQS®
- Apiguard® or Api Life Var®
- HopGuard® II

### Notes:

- Apivar® should not be used until surplus honey is removed.
- MAQS®, Apiguard® and Api Life Var® are not suitable for use in all temperatures. See the detailed descriptions of products below for temperature ranges for use of these products.
- HopGuard® II manufacturer's test data supports its effectiveness

### Moderately Effective Options:

- Requeening with hygienic bees
- Dividing colonies
- Oxalic acid drip

### Notes:

- Hygienic stock is not widely available.
- Requeening and dividing colonies may be difficult.
- Oxalic acid is most effective if there is little to no capped brood present.

### Least Effective Options:

- Apistan® or CheckMite+®
- Drone brood removal
- Screen bottom board
- Sanitation

### Notes:

- Mite resistance to Apistan® and CheckMite+® is well established.
- Colonies are unlikely to raise drones during this phase.
- Basic sanitation may help relieve stress.

## Non-Reliable, Non-Tested Methods and Illegal Chemicals

Several treatments are **ineffective** for Varroa mite control, including:

- » Low-dosage mineral oils
- » Additional acids (such as lactic acid)
- » Food stimulants and supplements
- » Powdered sugar
- » Small cell, "natural" comb for the rearing of smaller bees

Beekeepers should never use a non-registered chemical to control mites. Such use may violate both federal and state laws and is not a viable option for treating bee colonies.

Other methods that beekeepers may read or hear about should be adequately tested before adoption and should only be used with extreme caution. Always check for efficacy during and after use.