MANA QUEEN

ISOLATOR VARROA CONTROL

ONE FRAME METHOD

This option is for commercial beekeepers who have 1000 + hives to manage. It requires only two visits per hive just like synthetic strips do and it doesn't take longer than AFB inspection or swarm control.

The bases of this method lay in the fact that vaporizing varroa mites with oxalic acid is only effective during brood less period. Most of New Zealand does not have natural brood breaks. Whenever there is brood in the hive varroa is in reproductive phase, with majority of the mites under capped brood (60-70%). Most of varroa treatments do not harm mites under capped brood with exception of formic acid.

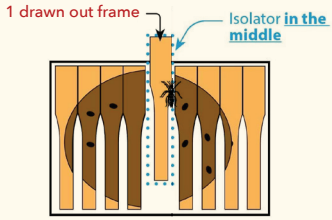
In northern hemisphere beekeepers only need to treat varroa once per season. One of the reasons behind this is an natural brood break during the winter. Low temperatures result in colonies completely stopping brood rearing and overwintering in brood less clusters. This can take up to 5 months. Reproductive cycle of the mite is interrupted. Varroa is at phoretic stage, exposed to most of the available treatments.

Hive only needs to be at its peak strength for the nectar collection period. It takes about 12 weeks for the colony to build up to its maximum strength from the moment queen lays her first frame (provided there is about I kg of bees, sufficient pollen and nectar). In New Zealand in some instances there is about 6 months (or more) difference between last honey flow of the season and first honey flow of new season. Excessive brood rearing during the winter causes colonies to have higher mite loads at the start of the spring and hive inclined to swarming before the start of the main flow.

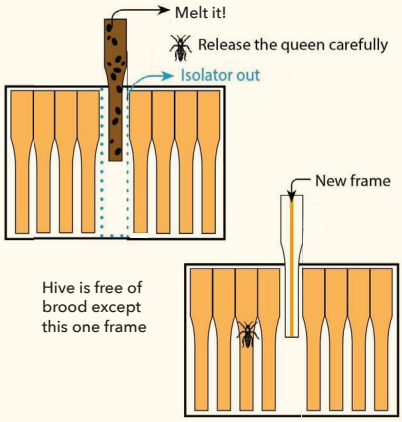
One of the ways of controlling mite level in the hives is reduction of brood rearing during winter months or completely stopping it for a period of time. Isolator is a good tool for both varroa control and management of colony development dynamics.

Stop excessive brood rearing in the winter, reduce mite numbers , save on cost of feeding and give your hives best possible start to the new season.

DAY 1: Place the cage in the middle of the brood box. Put drawn out frame inside. Find the queen, place her inside the isolator and close the lid.



DAY 24: All the brood outside of the isolator is hatched and varroa is in phoretic stage. Inside the isolator there is one capped brood frame containing all the reproductive mites. Remove this brood frame from the hive and melt it. Release the queen back into the colony and remove the isolator from the hive. The hive is now brood less . Vaporize the hive with oxalic acid and this will kill 99% of varroa mites.



These biotechnical methods are being developed and researched by Dr. Ralph Büchler & Team of the Institute of Kirchhain, Germany. Text, graphics and communication are part of the 'Onder arrest-project' of Honeybee Valley / University of Ghent, Belgium, lead by Dr. Ellen Danneels and Thomas Van Pelt.

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