



Menthol & Canola Oil Recipe

The Paper Towel Method For Controlling Tracheal Mites

Here's an effective way to use Menthol Crystals (menthol crystals are available from www.bee-commerce.com). This treatment really helps control tracheal mites, and it is effective whenever the outside temperature is above 45 degrees.

There is much documentation to support the menthol & oil method of tracheal mite control. Please visit: <http://www.wvu.edu/~agexten/varroa/varroa2.htm> for additional to view the results of studies by Dr. Jim Amrine, West Virginia University.

1) Measure and mix components

Into a glass jar put two standard packs of menthol crystals (3.4 oz. each) and add 8 oz. of canola oil. Gently heat on stovetop by placing jar into simmering water (double boiler style). Or gently microwave mixture (at 50% power). Remove from heat when the menthol crystals are completely dissolved. Use a wooden (not metal) spoon when stirring mixture.

2) Add to paper towels

Remove 30 paper towels from one roll; fold each in half and stack. Put stack of paper towels into a large zip-lock bag and add warm menthol-canola oil mixture.

Zip the bag shut then squeeze the towels in the bag until all towels are evenly saturated throughout.

This recipe will treat 15 colonies.

Towels can be stored at room temperature indefinitely if the bag is zipped closed.

3) Add to colonies

Do not add to colonies while a honey flow is on or when you have honey supers on the colony. Place one paper towel over the top bars of each brood chamber. The best time to treat is September. (Tracheal mites are usually not a problem from May to September, so no menthol needs to be used until the time that mites begin to build up in late August or September). Colonies can be treated anytime during the winter when temperatures rise above about 45 F. We recommend this treatment whenever tracheal mites are found. Additional treatments can be made in December, January and February. The bees will chew up the paper towels and discard them at the entrance in 3-4 days (or longer in winter).

Happy beekeeping!