

BIOSECURITY MEASURES IN BEEKEEPING | VARROOSIS

Biotechniques

Catching mites in brood frames: 2-frame "arrest" cage

With this method, the colony is rendered broodless, with up to 95% of the varroa mites being removed via the trapping combs in the 2-frame "arrest" cage.

Treatment with a chemical product is no longer necessary in this case. The varroa population gets a big hit which should enable the colony to cope with the remaining mites. This biotechnical method is a preferable intermediate step away from chemical treatments while striving for bees that do not need beekeeper intervention to suppress the mites.



step 1

Start the arrest period around June 15, depending on when nectar flow ends in your area. If you work with two brood boxes (e.g. Simplex hive type): put the brood box with the most brood below, so you can put the cage in the bottom brood box. In that way, there is enough room for the cage in the hive.



step 2

Find the queen. Carefully hang the 2-framed arrest cage in the center of the brood box. Add a frame with OPEN brood only + 1 frame with wax foundation. Then let the queen walk in gently or if the queen happened to be on a frame with only open brood: hang the frame with open brood and the queen in the cage.



step 3

Close the lid of the arrest cage and let the queen lay more eggs in the built-up frame with open brood. The frame with wax foundation will be built in the following days.



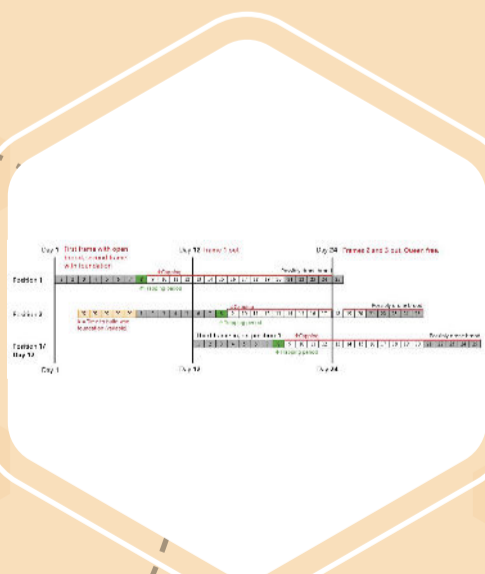
step 4

Day 12: Carefully open the cage. Take out the frame that now has sealed brood. Do this with caution so that the queen does not escape. Hang a frame with built up frame (wax already extended) in that place. Close the cage. Caution: check for new brood outside the arrest cage. If you find any, find the second queen, add her to the cage and extend your method by 12 days. This is more common if you are working with older queens.



step 5

Day 24: Carefully open the cage. Take out the 2 frames with sealed brood. Do this again with caution. Remove the cage and add new frames with wax foundation with the queen to the hive. After a few days, check to see if the queen is laying smoothly again.



step 6

An overview of the method with 2-framed "arrest" cage to catch varroa mites and remove them from the hive.

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