

HONEYBEE PARASITIC MITE SYNDROME

“BPMS is devastating to the entire colony; both adult bees and brood are affected. Symptoms can occur at any time of the year, although we are seeing more samples from mid-summer into fall. Some of the symptoms that we have found associated with BPMS are listed below. It is important to note that not all the symptoms may be evident in any one colony at a given time.

ADULT SYMPTOMS

1. Varroa destructor is present.
2. Reduction in adult bee population.
3. Evacuation of hive by crawling adult bees.
4. Queen supersedure
5. Acarapis woodi (Tracheal mites) may or may not be present

BROOD SYMPTOMS (More puzzling aspects of this syndrome are observed in the affected brood)

- I. Varroa destructor is present.
- II. Spotty brood pattern
- III. Symptoms resembling EFB, AFB, and sacbrood disease may be present.
(These symptoms may disappear following feeding of oxytetracycline, sugar syrup and the use of fluvalinate)
- IV. Individual larva may appear in the “C” stage larva to prepupa. As a result the affected brood may be seen anywhere on the comb.
- V. Individual larva may appear in the “C” stage, twisted in the cell, “molten” to the bottom of the cell, light brown in color as in the early stages of AFB.
- VI. The affected individuals do not display any ropiness.
- VII. Some scale formation has been noted, scales are not brittle as with AFB.
- VIII. Not typical odor can be associated with the syndrome.
- IX. Microscopically, the affected larva has not characteristic microbial flora.
- X. To date, no known bee pathogen has been isolated from the affected brood with BPMS.”

At this point, it is believed that the best control of BPMS is by effectively keeping Varroa mite infestations at low levels, There are no specific medications which controls this syndrome. Keeping up the general health of the bees and keeping down the mite infestation levels is the best you can do to combat it.