



Join the 2021 Mite-A-Thon

Both Spring and Fall Mite-A-Thons returning for 2021!

SPRING: Saturday, May 1 to Sunday, May 16

FALL: Saturday, August 14 to Sunday, August 29



What is the Mite-A-Thon? Mite-A-Thon is an international effort twice a year to help beekeepers gain knowledge of the level of mite infestation that their hives are carrying at the beginning of the season and just before the overwintering season begins.

Who can participate? All beekeepers can participate from Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Their *Varroa* monitoring data will be uploaded to www.mitecheck.com and a report will be produced (without identifying individual participants). The data collected by participants also helps to visualize *Varroa* infestations in honey bee colonies across North America within a two-week window.

What can beekeepers gain by participating? The parasitic mite, *Varroa destructor* (*Varroa*), and the viruses it vectors is a significant driver honey bee colony mortality. Yet, indicators suggest that many beekeepers are not monitoring honey bee colony *Varroa* infestations and therefore aren't able to connect infestation to colony loss.

What are the reasons the Mite-A-Thon is being held? There are two objectives of the Mite-A-Thon:

- 1) To raise awareness about honey bee colony *Varroa* infestations through effective monitoring methods.
- 2) To make available management strategies for discussion within bee organizations utilizing Mite-A-Thon partner developed information and outreach materials.



Why are there two testing periods? Testing early in the season is recommended for getting a leg up on mite infestations and learning monitoring techniques, and late testing is important because overwintering success is at least partially dependent on mite loads. Having 2 testing periods, Spring Mite-A-Thon and the Fall Mite-A-Thon at the end of August, encourages training and monitoring at crucial times, as well as throughout the summer.



For more information contact Pollinator Partnership at 415-362-1137 or miteathon@pollinator.org or visit <http://www.pollinator.org/miteathon>.





How will it work? Participants will monitor the level of mites (number of mites per 100 bees) using a standardized protocol utilizing two common methods of assessment (powdered sugar roll or alcohol wash) and then enter data, including location, total number of hives, number of hives tested, local habitat, and the number of *Varroa* mites counted from each hive. The published information will not identify individual participants, but will contribute greatly to ongoing research.

What is the next step for a beekeeper or beekeeping organization? Put these dates on

your calendar NOW. Determine your preferred method of testing for mites and commit to testing in May, August, and throughout the summer. Report your data at www.mitecheck.com. There is a prize for the beekeeping organization that creates the best outreach and participation. Take photos of your group events and stay tuned for details near the fall Mite-A-Thon.

Who is organizing the Mite-A-Thons? The two Mite-A-Thons are being organized by a group of stakeholders dedicated to supporting beekeeping everywhere in North America, including the American Honey Producers Association, Bee Informed Partnership, USDA, University of Maryland, Pollinator Partnership, American Beekeeping Federation, Michigan State University, Honey Bee Health Coalition, University of Minnesota Bee Lab and Bee Squad, Canadian Honey Council, Mite-Check, Project Apis m., Bee Friendly Farming, Newfoundland and Labrador Beekeeping Association, Manitoba Ministry of Agriculture and Resource Development, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and Almond Board of California.

Need Help? Visit the Mite-A-Thon Web site and sign up for updates at <https://www.pollinator.org/miteathon/miteathon-signup> or view the report from 2020 at <https://www.pollinator.org/miteathon>.



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