

# What's Shaking?

BY JORIK PHILLIPS

## SUGAR SHAKE FOR MITE COUNTS

The sugar shake is a reliable, no kill, fast and easy, method of monitoring varroa mite levels in your hives.

Performed at regular intervals throughout the season, it is a valuable tool in determining when and if to treat, or even the degree of hygienic behavior exhibited by your bees. Make it part of your regular inspection regimen and stay ahead of the mites.

### WATCH THE VIDEO!

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvWfGMvy\\_zs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvWfGMvy_zs)

Or search YouTube: Jorik Honeybee Sugar Shake Mite Count



### THE KIT

The basic kit contains a 1qt wide mouth canning jar with a #8 screen in the lid band, 10X sugar, 1/2 cup measuring cup, spray bottle, white paper plate and pen. All the components fit in a Rubbermaid tub that is perfect for shaking the sample into. See video for details.



*Take a 1/2 cup of nurse bees from a frame in the center of the brood nest. The frame should contain capped and uncapped brood. Be careful not to take the queen.*



*Add sample to a 1qt wide mouth Ball jar containing 2Tbsp 10X sugar. The lid band has a circle of #8 hardware cloth pressed in it.*



*Shake, shake, shake.  
Spray plate with water to dissolve sugar and reveal mites.  
Count mites.*



*The sample bees are returned to their hive, a little dusty but none the worse for wear. Their sisters will clean them up good as new. Really!*

### HOW MANY IS TOO MANY?

Depending on the time of year the mite count reveals a different level of infestation.

**April - May** • greater than 3 mites (the pre-super period) is considered a treatment or economic threshold.

**June - July** • greater than 10 mites is the economic threshold and cause for concern. If supers are on, treatment options are limited.

**August - Oct** • greater than 12 mites is the economic threshold. When supers are removed, more treatment options available.