Using Essential Oils for Mite Control

Fogging:

Fogging can be done weekly. We typically fog every other week because that's how often we can get into our hives for inspections. We increase to weekly if we have a hive with a mite issue.

Use an insect fogger (ours is a Burgess 1443 propane insect fogger) and fill the reservoir with 16oz of mineral oil and 25 drops of wintergreen essential oil. This will last a season when fogging weekly.

Please practice using your fogger before using it on your hives
If not run properly foggers will emit flames! (We learned the hard way!)

Fog the entrance of the hive until the fog starts coming out of the hole in the inner cover.

This process helps with mite control because the mineral oil makes it hard for the mites to hold onto the bees, the mites do not like the essential oil, and the bees groom themselves after fogging.

Fogging can be done with honey supers on.

Essential Oil Paper Towels:

In addition to the fogging we add straight essential oils to paper towel squares on the inner covers.

Put 4 squares, about 2"X2", around the opening in the center of the inner cover. Add white thyme essential oil (about 5-8 or so drops) to 2 squares, and spearmint **or** wintergreen essential oil to the other 2 squares.

Place the paper towels with the same essential oils diagonally opposite from one another.

The bees do not like foreign material in the hive so they will drag the paper towels squares down through the hive and out the entrance, spreading the essential oils as they go.

You can do this weekly as well, but at least every other week. We do this all season long until the bees are tucked in for the winter, then we start again in the spring as soon as we begin hive inspections again. If hive inspections are delayed in the spring because of inclement weather, we'll still pop the top of our hives to at least add the paper towels with the essential oils.

This process helps with mite control because the mites do not like the essential oil.

This can be done with honey supers on.