

Grease Patty Recipe For Tracheal Mites

No matter where you live, an effective treatment called a grease patty is made as follows:

- > Obtain a can of solid vegetable shortening—3 pounds (1.5 kg) is common.
- > Get a pan large enough to easily hold twice this amount of shortening.
- > Put the shortening in the pan, and slowly warm it on your stove.
- > When the shortening reaches the translucent stage, and is not quite liquid, begin adding 10 pounds (4.5 kg) of regular sugar. (The formula is 3:1, sugar to shortening.)
- > When all the sugar is added, add an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ pound (.2 kg) of honey (from your bees or from a safe source). Stir in.
- > Turn off the heat, and add 1 ounce (28 g) of food-grade peppermint flavoring. Stir and mix well.
- > Let cool.
- > Using an ice cream scoop and waxed paper, scoop out about a hamburger-sized dose of the finished mix and put it on a sheet of the waxed paper about twice the dose's size. Add more paper and flatten. Freeze the patties until needed.
- > Place one patty on your colony (leave the paper on the bottom) between the two boxes with the most bees in them, as early in the spring as you can, and replace it when most of it is gone. Continue adding these until your honey flow starts, then quit until the honey flow is over.
- > Add a patty in the fall, and have one in place for overwintering.
- > This recipe makes a lot of patties, so you may end up sharing with a friend.

Because sugar and shortening are essentially odorless to a honey bee, the honey and peppermint act as attractants. You will find some colonies eat these patties rapidly, whereas others are slow. If the bees are slow, add additional honey, sugar, and peppermint to a new mix to increase attractiveness. A rare few will never eat them. If that happens, leave them on anyway and hope for the best. It's all you can do for these bees.