

Tips on protecting your hives from pesticides:

1. **Control *Varroa* levels.** *Varroa* mites feed on bees' fat body, which is a critical organ for detoxifying pesticides. Studies show that bees that are parasitized by *Varroa* and exposed to pesticides fare worse than non-parasitized bees facing the same chemicals (you can read about it [here](#)).

For information about *Varroa* management, check out the [Honey Bee Health Coalition](#), request a free [inspection](#) by a state apiary inspector, or register for a "[Fight the Mite](#)" workshop. Also, avoid using CheckMite+ and Apistan to control mites. These products contain the miticides coumaphos and tau-fluvalinate, which accumulate in wax and negatively impact bee health.

2. **Swap out old comb.** Many pesticides accumulate in wax. To reduce pesticide levels in your hives, regularly replace old frames. This practice can also curb disease build-up in your equipment.
3. **Talk to your neighbors.** Ask what products they spray on their gardens, lawns or farm fields. This includes products used to control ticks and fleas. Encourage them to use bee-friendly products or practices. For more information on pollinator-friendly pest control, explore these [resources](#).
4. **Check pesticide labels and always follow label instructions.** Many common products, including those used to control fleas and ticks, contain chemicals (like fipronil) that are highly toxic to bees. Consider finding bee-friendly alternatives. And ALWAYS apply products according to the label (the label is the law!).
5. **Use IPM practices to manage pests - and encourage your neighbors to do the same.** IPM stands for Integrated Pest Management. It is a commonly used strategy for minimizing pesticide use. For more info about IPM, click [here](#).