

# The dos and don'ts of using medicinal products to control diseases of bees

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## Medicinal products for bees

Under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 (SI 2033), a veterinary medicinal product is defined as any substance or combination of substances presented as having properties for treating or preventing disease in animals. The word “animal” means all animals other than man, including birds, reptiles, fish, molluscs, crustaceans and bees. Because bees are classed as food-producing, anything which is used in a beehive to control or eradicate pests or diseases is classed as a medicine and must therefore be registered under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013. This means that homemade remedies or substances that have not been approved in Europe and the UK must not be used. Medicines currently approved for bees in the UK are shown in the Table below:

Trade Name	Licence Holder	Product Licence No.	Active ingredient	Distributor
API-Bioxal, 886 mg/g powder for in-hive use	Chemicals Laif S.P.A	23101/4001	Oxalic Acid	Chemicals Laif S.P.A
Apiguard Gel (25% Thymol) for Beehive Use	Vita (Europe) Ltd	17017/4002	Thymol	Vita (Europe) Limited
Apilife Var Beehive Strip for Honey Bees	Chemicals Laif S.P.A	23101/4000	Camphor Racemic, Eucalyptus Oil, Menthol Levo, Thymol	Chemicals Laif S.P.A
Apistan 10.3% w/w Beehive Strip	Vita (Europe) Ltd	17017/4000	Tau Fluvalinate	Vita (Europe) Limited
Apitraz 500 mg Beehive Strips for Honey Bees	Laboratorios Calier, SA	20634/4009	Amitraz	Laboratorios Calier, SA
Apivar 500 mg Beehive Strips for Honey Bees	Veto Pharma	48004/4000	Amitraz	Veto Pharma
Bayvarol 3.6 mg Beehive Strips for Honey Bees	Bayer plc	00010/4090	Flumethrin	Bayer plc
Dany's BienenWohl Powder and Solution for 39.4 mg/ml Beehive Dispersion for Honey Bees	DANY Bienenwohl GmbH	EU/2/18/225/001-002	Oxalic acid dihydrate	
MAQS Formic Acid 68.2g Beehive Strips for Honey Bees	NOD Europe Ltd	40476/4000	Formic Acid	BCW (Agriculture) Limited Bee-Equipment Ltd

Oxuvar 5.7%, 41.0 mg/ml Concentrate for Solution for Honey Bees	Andermatt BioVet GmbH	36234/4001	Oxalic Acid	Andermatt BioVet GmbH
Oxybee Powder and Solution for 39.4 mg/ml Beehive Dispersion for Honey Bees	DANY Bienenwohl GmbH	EU/2/17/216/001-002	Oxalic acid dihydrate	
PolyVar Yellow 275 mg Beehive Strip	Bayer plc	00010/4216	Flumethrin	Bayer plc
Thymovar 15 g Beehive Strips for Honey Bees	Andermatt BioVet GmbH	36234/4000	Thymol	Agri Nova Technology Andermatt BioVet GmbH
VarroMed 5 mg/ml + 44 mg/ml Beehive Dispersion for Honey Bees	BeeVital GmbH	EU/2/16/203/001	Formic Acid, Oxalic acid dihydrate	
VarroMed 75 mg + 660 mg Beehive Dispersion for Honey Bees	BeeVital GmbH	EU/2/16/203/002	Formic Acid, Oxalic acid dihydrate	

These medicines are classed as “over-the-counter” medicines and therefore do not have any legal requirements for supply or use, such as a veterinary prescription. However, a responsible approach is still expected.

## Keeping records

When using bee treatments, the Regulations require that:

1. The product has a marketing authorisation for its administration in the United Kingdom, and the administration is in accordance with that marketing authorisation
2. Beekeepers must keep proof of purchase of all veterinary medicinal products acquired for the treatment of bees under their care (or, if they were not bought, documentary evidence of how they were acquired).
3. Beekeepers must keep the following records:
  - 3.1 When acquiring the products:
    - (a) Name of the product and the batch number;
    - (b) Date of acquisition;
    - (c) Quantity acquired; and
    - (d) Name and address of the supplier.
  - 3.2 When administering the products:
    - (a) Name of the product;
    - (b) Date of administration;
    - (c) Quantity administered;
    - (d) The withdrawal period; and
    - (e) Identification of the bees treated.

3.3 When disposing of any or all of the products other than by treating bees:

- (a) Date of disposal;
- (b) Quantity of product involved; and
- (c) How and where it was disposed of.

Records or documentation must be kept of the acquisition of veterinary medicinal products and their administration or disposal for at least the following five years, irrespective of whether or not the bees concerned are no longer in that keeper's possession or have died during that period.

## **Waste medicines and medicine containers – pharmaceutical waste**

Pharmaceutical waste refers to products such as unwanted, expired, damaged or contaminated medicinal products, waste substances that contain medicinal products, receptacles used as medicinal product containers, contaminated garments and instruments (gloves, tubes, bottles, plastic syringes, etc.). Outer paper wrapping or cardboard boxes are not classed as pharmaceutical waste unless they have been contaminated by a medicinal product.

L&DBKA now operates a service for members allowing them to dispose of their pharmaceutical waste correctly. Disposal can be carried out at the apiary at the normal opening times. More details to follow in due course.

For more information, please visit:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/bee-medicines-availability-in-the-uk](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/bee-medicines-availability-in-the-uk)