

NORTH LONDON BEEKEEPERS

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Information Sheet No.9

Varroacides

(This is an appendix to Information sheet No.6 on Integrated Varroa Management).

The use of chemicals to kill mites (or otherwise reduce their numbers) is applied directly on adult bees, as fumigants, contact strips or by evaporation. These may include **authorised** proprietary veterinary medicines and **unauthorised** generic substances.

Pyrethroid strips – “Apistan or Bayvarol” authorised

These products have been used in the UK for the last 13 years (up to 2006) with good success, but Varroa mites are becoming resistant to pyrethroid treatments and IVM is being developed to help reduce mite populations within bee colonies to an acceptable level without them. Apistan & Bayvarol (£2.50 per dose, 2006) will remain as one of the methods to treat colonies, in non-resistant areas (London now has a high level of resistance and pyrethroids will no longer be effective).

Apiguard (thymol based) authorised (Reference to CSL of the National Bee Unit, fact sheet 13)

Supplied packaged in shallow foil trays 75mm square with peel off lids (follow instructions – 5 doses = £18.50, 2006). Bulk tubs are available.

Apiguard **must not** be applied when there is honey (for extraction) on the hive.

2 trays are used, the second one 14 days after the first. Preferably use when the weather is 15 to 25 degrees C. Less effective below 15. The bees spread the gell around to get rid of it. Shown to be between 74% & 99% effective. It is important to close off the ventilation in roof and floor (not the entrance!).

This treatment may also be useful against acarine.

Formic Acid 60% - unauthorised treatment

Formic acid **must not** be applied when there is honey (for extraction) on the hive

This has been used for some time for both varroa and acarine. It should be dispensed in a “nassenheider” acid evaporator with a wick. Size of wick depends on the expected outside temperature. Replace the wick with each use with beer mats cut to size. (Follow the instructions that come with the evaporator.) This acid is very corrosive and needs handling with extreme care.

Oxalic Acid is now recognised as a suitable treatment and is sold in sugar syrup solution, which is dribbled onto the bees between the brood frames when there is little or no brood present. The acid kills brood. See Thornes catalogue for details of “oxuvar” which is 3.2% oxalic acid in syrup and follow the instructions that come with it. **Caution:** dangerous to handle!! Normally recommended time to treat is December or very affective immediately after a shook swarm.

Thornes has oxalic acid crystals in its catalogue, together with dispensers, but has no recommended dosage or instructions. Also see “Oxalic Acid Cleansing”. BBKA advisory leaflet No B13.

Lactic Acid - unauthorised treatment

Kills brood. The NBU (CSL) is researching their use for treatment of varroa and it is recommended that they should not be used until the results are available, expected in the Autumn 2006. Lactic acid is not available in the UK.

NB: *It is stipulated that when using any of the above, honey must be removed to avoid it becoming contaminated.*

