

Information Sheet - Varroacides

This is an appendix to the Information sheet on Integrated Varroa Management.
Refer for full information to “Managing Varroa” by FERA 2009

The use of chemicals to kill mites (or otherwise reduce their numbers) are 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 17 years (up to 2010) with good success, but Varroa mites have become 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 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).

Apiquard & Api Life Var (thymol based) authorised

(Reference to CSL of the National Bee Unit, fact sheet 13)

Supplied packaged, follow manufacturers’ instructions, both take approximately 4 weeks and can cause the Queen to stop laying during this time.

Do not apply when there is honey (for extraction) on the hive.

Shown to be between 74% & 99% effective. It is important to close off the ventilation in roof and floor (not the entrance!). Ideal outside temperature should be between 15deg C and 25deg C.

This treatment may also be useful against acarine.

Formic Acid - unauthorised treatment – its fumes will penetrate capping and therefore kill mites within. Formic acid **must not** be applied when there is honey (for extraction) on the hive. This acid is very corrosive and needs handling with extreme care.

60% formic acid 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.)

Formic acid can also be used in pad form – no details available.

Oxalic Acid – unauthorised treatment

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 or after natural swarm is hived. Thornes has oxalic acid crystals in its catalogue, together with dispensers, but has no recommended dosage or instructions!

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. 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.