



Varroa Control Using Organic Acids

Organic acids i.e. formic, oxalic and lactic acid are generic substances and are extensively used for *Varroa* control in Europe, however, depending on which Member State you live in, their legal status will vary. These acids can be very caustic so safety precautions, such as wearing safety goggles, breathing mask, acid proof gloves etc., must be adhered to.

Use of organic acids in the United Kingdom.

By law, beekeepers may only use an organic acid which has been registered and approved by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). The only registered and approved product that contains an organic acid in the UK is Mite Away Quick Strip pads (MAQS) which contains formic acid. As the substance has no withdrawal period, it can be used during a honey flow.

What about authorised medicines in other EU Member States?

Authorised medicines which contain organic acids are available from other EU Member States under the Cascade scheme. Products which are available under such schemes are Api- Bioxal and Ecoxal, both authorised medicines in individual EU Member states and both contain oxalic acid. To obtain a product from the EU, a beekeeper would have to apply through their local veterinary surgeon who would then issue them the amount needed.

Can generic organic acids be used to treat against *Varroa*?

The use of generic organic acids or a treatment made up by a veterinary surgeon would only be permitted if in the vet's clinical judgement it was justifiable, after having worked through the tiers of the Cascade.

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Once the vet is satisfied that the beekeeper has taken every measure to treat for *Varroa* by using a UK authorised product which have then not solved the problem, the vet will then try an EU authorised product on a Special Import Certificate under the Cascade. In the rare instance that this then didn't work, the vet would consider making up an extemporaneous treatment.

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