



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



BEEKEEPING EDUCATION MODULES

Use of Veterinary Medicines in Beekeeping

These presentations are funded by the Scottish Government as part of Scotland's Honey Bee Health Strategy

This presentation is part of a suite developed by the Scottish Government and SRUC to provide local associations advice and information on statutory beekeeping requirements, best practice, and how the Scottish Government provides support to Scottish beekeepers.

Aims and Objectives



- ▶ To ensure beekeepers are aware of:
 - ▶ Their legal responsibilities for usage of medicinal products.
 - ▶ What can and cannot be used
 - ▶ How to report concerns of illegal use of medicines, products or any other substance.

This presentation sets out the legal position regarding the usage of medicinal products when keeping bees.

Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013



Products used for treatment of bees are veterinary medicine products. The VMD establishes the rules for applying the products.



A list of approved medicines can be found in the links at the end of the presentation.



They are governed by the Veterinary Medicine regulations and beekeepers are subject to their compliance.



Any product used for treatment is considered a medicinal product. Only VMD approved products can be used.

Veterinary medicines are a reserved issue and are managed by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 govern the administration of medicinal products for food-producing livestock – including bees. This is in order to protect public health, honey bee health and the health and safety of the beekeepers. You can find the links and QR code at the end of this presentation

Authorised Veterinary Products

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate's Product Information Database. At the top left is the VMD logo. The main header is 'Product Information Database'. Below this, a 'BETA' notice states: 'This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.' A breadcrumb trail reads 'Start Page > Product Information Database'. Navigation links include 'Show All', 'A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z', 'Numerically Named Products', and 'Recently updated'. There are also links for 'Recently authorised' and 'Search'. A menu bar contains buttons for 'Home', 'Currently authorised products', 'Expired products', 'Suspended products', 'Registered homeopaths', and 'Refused applications'. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column is titled 'Product Information Database' and contains text explaining that the site provides current information on authorised veterinary medicines in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and that product details are subject to change. The right column is titled 'Downloads' and provides links for 'Excel' and 'XML' to download a snapshot of the database data.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate **Product Information Database**

BETA This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

Start Page > [Product Information Database](#)

[Show All](#) [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#) [Numerically Named Products](#) [Recently updated](#)
[Recently authorised](#) [Search](#)

Home [Currently authorised products](#) [Expired products](#) [Suspended products](#) [Registered homeopaths](#)
[Refused applications](#)

Product Information Database

This website contains current information about veterinary medicines authorised in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Product details are subject to change. Once approved by the VMD, the updated Summary of Product Characteristics (SPCs) that supplies the label text will be available here almost immediately. However, it may take up to 12 months for these changes to appear on marketed packaging.

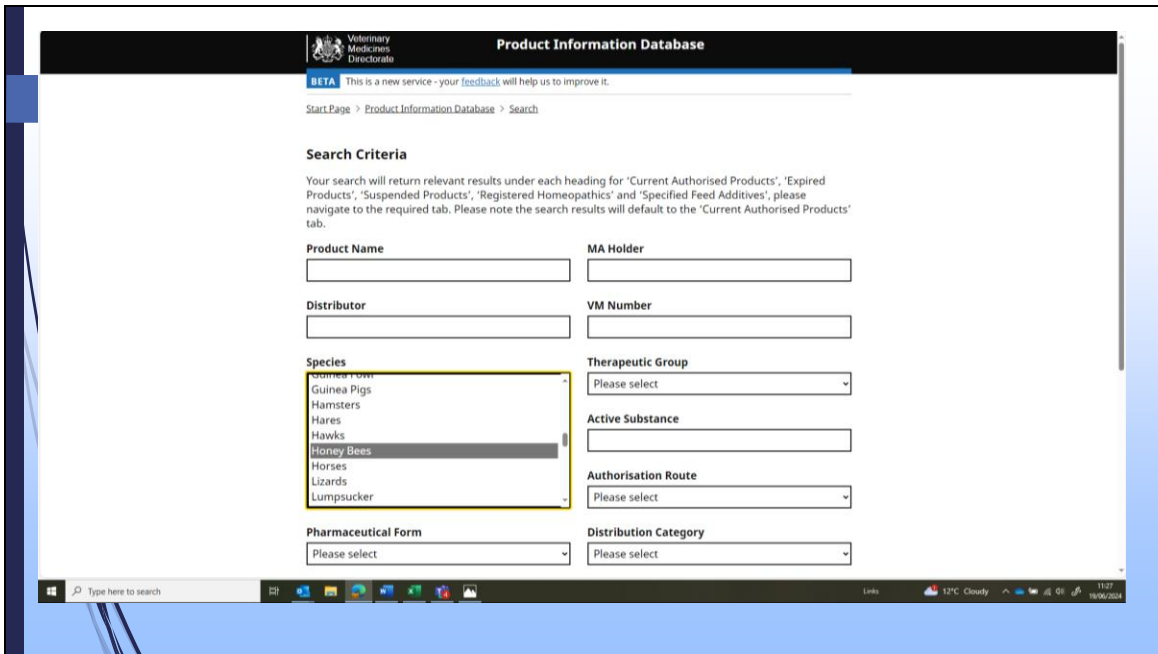
If you are concerned about any differences seen, please contact the Authorisation / Registration holder or VMD

Downloads

The links below provide a snapshot of the Product Information Database data available for download.

[Excel](#)
[XML](#)

This is what the database looks like. The list of authorised veterinary products is available on the UK Government website. There's a link to the site at the end of the presentation. List of approved medicines can also be found on the VMD website or on BeeBase.



There are thousands of approved medicinal products for animal species in the UK, but luckily you can search for honeybees and a list of all products will be displayed. On the website scroll down to Honey Bees to find bee medicines.

What do you need to record?

■ When buying

1. The name of the product and the batch number;
2. The date of acquisition;
3. The quantity acquired;
4. The name and address of the supplier.

■ When administering

1. The name of the product;
2. The date of administration;
3. The quantity administered;
4. The withdrawal period;
5. The identification of the animals treated.

➤ When disposing

1. The date of disposal;
2. The quantity of product involved; and
3. How and where it was disposed of.

So long as you record this information then you are keeping to the rules.

Veterinary Medicines Regs – Record Keeping



- ▶ **All these records must be maintained for at least 5 years even if the bees are no longer kept or have died during the period.**
- ▶ **You must provide these records if asked to do so by a Bee Health Inspector**

You are legally required to keep these records for a minimum of 5 years, even if you no longer have the bees or they died or were destroyed in the 5 year period.

And you must allow the inspector access to the records – paper or electronic.

BeeBase Medicine record

VETERINARY MEDICINE ADMINISTRATION RECORD – TO BE KEPT FOR 5 YEARS

NAME:	ADDRESS:
APIARY NAME/LOCATION:	

TO BE COMPLETED AT TIME OF PURCHASE					TO BE COMPLETED AT TIME OF ADMINISTRATION						
Name and Address of Supplier of Medicinal Product	Date Purchased	Identity and Quantity of Medicinal Product			Date of Administration	Hive numbers/ID	Duration of treatment	Withdrawal period	Name of person administering veterinary medicine	Total quantity of veterinary medicine used	Date & route of disposal if not administered
		Name	Batch No	Quantity							

There is no official form but here is an example one, which you can download from BeeBase, there is a link at the end and the SBA also have an example one. Links to these can be found at the end of the presentation

Reporting concerns with medicine usage or potential risks to public health through residues.

- ▶ We ask all beekeepers to be responsible, promote good practice and be guardians of the industry.
- ▶ You can report any concerns about medicine misuse to the VMD
 - ▶ Report illegal animal medicines - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
 - ▶ You can submit an anonymous report through:
 - ▶ the online reporting form and selecting the anonymous option
 - ▶ our telephone “Hotline” on 01932 338 338

We urge beekeepers to report any concerns that they have with misuse of medicines. It is our responsibility as beekeepers to promote and to protect our industry’s reputation. We must report any incidence of known illegal usage of medicines.

FSS is responsible for food safety, but also food fraud. Illegal use of medicines can lead to unsafe honey, not only through residues, but also through potential allergic reactions and so forth. It is paramount that when a member of the public purchases honey, they purchase a product that is safe and has not residues or potential harmful residues.

Mislabelling, selling a honey as a variety which is not, adulteration through addition of syrups, feeding syrup to bees to produce honey, and all those practices should be reported to the FSS. Fraud involves an intentional activity for financial gain, many beekeepers will be making mistakes unintentionally or believing that what they do is safe, or common practice.

Beekeepers need to be extremely careful of what advice they follow. There is plenty of advice online that is illegal in the UK, ineffective at best, harmful for bees, beekeepers, the environment and public health at worse. Please be responsible.

Reporting concerns about medicine misuse or potential risks for public health through residues.

FSS

- ▶ Whether you are a member of the public or working within the food and drink sector, you can report food crime anonymously in one of the following ways:
 - ▶ Call the Scottish Food Crime Hotline (0800 028 7926), in partnership with Crimestoppers. The hotline is free and anonymous.
 - ▶ You can also submit information using the online webform.
 - ▶ If you would prefer to speak with a Food Crime team member in confidence, you can email foodcrime@fss.scot.

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Mislabelling, selling a honey as a variety which is not, adulteration through addition of syrups, feeding syrup to bees to produce honey - all those practices should be reported to the FSS. Many beekeepers may be unintentionally be committing fraud by doing these things.

Beekeepers need to be extremely careful that they are following

advice for UK beekeepers as our laws governing medicine use and food safety may differ to other countries'. Please ensure that the advice you source is relevant to the UK.

Disposal of medicines

Figure 30: Synthetic pesticide strips applied to a colony in autumn



Please ensure that spent medicines, eg, varroacides are disposed of responsibly and in accordance with the product information.

- Synthetic pesticide strips, such as Amitraz, may still contain active ingredients and must be kept away from water sources.
- Any waste with remnants of thymol should be discarded at a waste disposal center as thymol is not suitable for household waste.
- The VMD approved Oxalic treatments, MAQS and Formic Pro, are **compostable** and can be placed in compost piles, but should be **kept away from water sources**, such as streams or ponds.

Some medicines, such as Apivar & Apistan can contaminate the environment if not correctly disposed of. You must dispose of treatments responsibly, especially Synthetic pesticides. Nothing should be put in wastewater or near watercourses. Your local council, Vet or Pharmacy may have further advice. Formic acid and Oxalic acid products can be disposed of in your household waste or be composted.

Please always check the information sheet with the medicine for the appropriate disposal method.

VMD LINKS

[Veterinary Medicine Regulations 2013](#)



[Veterinary Medicine Database](#)



[Fact_28_Veterinary_Medicine_Administration_Record.pdf](#)



SBA Record sheet

[**TDS-number-12-Veterinary-treatment-record.pdf**](#)

Here you will find the regulations and the database from the VMD and example record cards

Resources available: Scottish Government

Contact: Bees_Mailbox@gov.scot



[Scottish Honey Bee Health Legislation](#)



[The Honey \(Scotland\) Regulations 2015](#)



Here are some of the Government resources available to you. If you have any queries you can contact the Honey Bee Health Team by email.

Resources available: Scottish Government and SRUC



Contact: Bees_Mailbox@gov.scot

[Scottish Government Honey Bee Health Strategy 2022-2032](#)

[Scottish Government Honey Bee Implementation Plan](#)

[SRUC Bee Podcasts](#)



Here are some of the Government and SRUC resources available to you. If you have any queries you can contact the Honey Bee Health Team by email.

Information about how the Scottish Government supports honey bees in Scotland can be found via the QR codes.

SRUC podcasts on honey bee management can be found using the QR code.

Resources Available – Others

[Scottish Beekeepers Association](#)



[Bee Farmers Association](#)



[BeeBase – Information for Scottish Beekeepers](#)



You can also use a search engine to find these sites



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SRUC

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All images are AI produced. Many thanks