

**Varroa Scottish Working Group  
First meeting  
21<sup>st</sup> of October 2020 – Teleconference**

**Attendees:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>POSITION</b>
[Redacted Text]	SG	Lead Bee Inspector
[Redacted Text]	SG-SASA	Assistant Zoology Manager
[Redacted Text]	SG	Business Support
[Redacted Text]	SRUC	Apiculture Specialist
<b>[Redacted Text]Group Chair.</b>	<b>SBA</b>	<b>Bee Health &amp; Science Trustee</b>
[Redacted Text]	BFA	General Secretary
[Redacted Text]	BFA	Board Member / Scottish representative.
[Redacted Text]	FSS	Science Branch
[Redacted Text]	Aberdeen University.	
[Redacted Text]	VMD	Veterinary Assessor
[Redacted Text]	VMD	Head of Residues/ UK surveillance
[Redacted Text]	VMD	

**1. Background:**

- Use of Amitraz by Scottish Beekeepers during honey flow.
- Conversation with VMD / Veto-pharma / FSS / NBU regarding use of Amitraz lead to confirmation that Amitraz based products cannot be used for Varroa control when supers are on or there is a honey flow.
- This lead to conversations regarding available products for efficient and timely Varroa treatment in Scotland.
- We agreed on a generalised lack of clarity regarding Varroa treatments in Scotland: time, efficiency, labelling, legality and how to maximise effectiveness combining with IPM programs.
- We believe that the above would merit the creation of a Varroa Working Group to clarify these issues.

**2. Other points of interest / considerations:**

- New EU Animal Health regulation includes Varroa on the list of reportable diseases. (Reportable doesn't mean notifiable as EFB or AFB). Trade with the EU would be dependent on the UK having a reporting system for Varroa.
- FERA has an on-going project initially led by [Redacted Text] on Varroa which had similar objectives to those highlighted in our initial discussion.
- Scotland has a very particular set of circumstances due to weather and beekeeping practices.
- Sampling of veterinary medicine residues is very limited. Only 9 samples are tested for residues every year, of those, only 1 is for Amitraz.
- Testing carried out by Local Authorities doesn't look for veterinary medicine residues.
- Testing carried out by industry is not available to public or government.
- Current FSS testing does not include veterinary medications.

### **3. Points of discussion during the meeting:**

- Difficulties in changing labelling on mutually recognised medicinal products and treatments. VMD.
- 'Pragmatic approach' - Differentiation between use against label advice of treatments which might lead to exceeding maximum residue limits Vs those which might just affect effectiveness or good practices. VMD.
- Authorisation process for veterinary medicines and evidence based decisions. VMD
- Clarity required on withdrawal period's nomenclature on beekeeping medicinal products. 0 days withdrawal period for some products leads to confusion. VMD.
- UK wide approach Vs Scottish approach: Bee Base might be the best place to provide guidance.
- Conversation regarding a study to test for the presence of Amitraz in honey after the use of Amitraz based Varroacides. Authorities view is that this is responsibility of the product manufacturer and not for SG to conduct those studies.
- Legal challenges and difficulties surrounding advice on effectiveness of products without official scientific data.

### **4. Proposed actions:**

- Creation of simple guidance for available Varroa Treatments which includes:
  - Generic advice for each substance.
  - Specific advice for each product.
  - Labelling instructions Vs practical application.
  - Official clarification if needed by VMD / NBU / Bee Inspectorate.
  - Effectiveness.
  - Disposal of Veterinary Medicines used for beekeeping.
  - Suggested alternative IPM programmes
- Review of existing NBU guidance on Varroa treatment which combines effectiveness of non-biotechnical methods with the use of Varroacides.
- Consider review of Varroa distribution in Scotland in order to provide specific advice to beekeepers in different geographical areas.
- [Redacted Text] created a mind map for the project.

Action reference	Action owner	Action	Comments
1	[Redacted Text]	Share Mind map with areas of interest for Varroa Working Group.	
2	[Redacted Text]	Share with [Redacted Text] honey testing carried out by Local Authorities.	
3	[Redacted Text]	Organise next meeting for mid-January 2021.	
4	[Redacted Text]	Distribution of list of products and substances within the group for review and to highlight items for clarification.	
5	VMD / SG / NBU	To approve or provide official guidance on areas needing clarification following action ref 4.	
6	[Redacted Text]	Contact [Redacted Text]? Regarding existing work on Varroa which fits with the aims of this group.	
7	[Redacted Text]	Identify what work has been completed by Aberdeen University on Varroa treatments, efficiency and any other areas which might be of interest for the purpose of this group.	Possible contact through [Redacted Text] in FERA.
8	[Redacted Text]	Contact FERA. [Redacted Text]. Try to ascertain scope of their work	

		and possible collaboration.	
9	[Redacted Text]	Contact SEPA and seek guidance for disposal of veterinary medicines from Beekeeping practices.	
10	[Redacted Text]	Contact NBU and seek collaboration on updating Varroa guidance in BeeBase.	
11	[Redacted Text]	Discuss with [Redacted Text] and BHIP possible work on Varroa surveillance for Scotland. Revitalise map of Varroa distribution from 2011	
12	[Redacted Text]	Consider approaching pharmaceutical companies producing Amitraz based products to lobby for studies that prove safety of use during honey flow.	

## **Varroa Scottish Working Group**

### **Second meeting**

**26<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – Teleconference**

#### **Summary of the Meeting**

- The group discussed [Redacted Text] Varroa Medicines Matrix.
- The group discussed issues with the SPCs for Amitraz (Apitraz, Apivar) and Pyrethrin (Apistan, Bayvarol, Polyvar) based products.
- The group discussed wax recycling in the UK, its common approaches, and its implications.