

FUTURE OPTIONS FOR VARROA CONTROL

NBBC – NBARS

21 - 22 March 2024

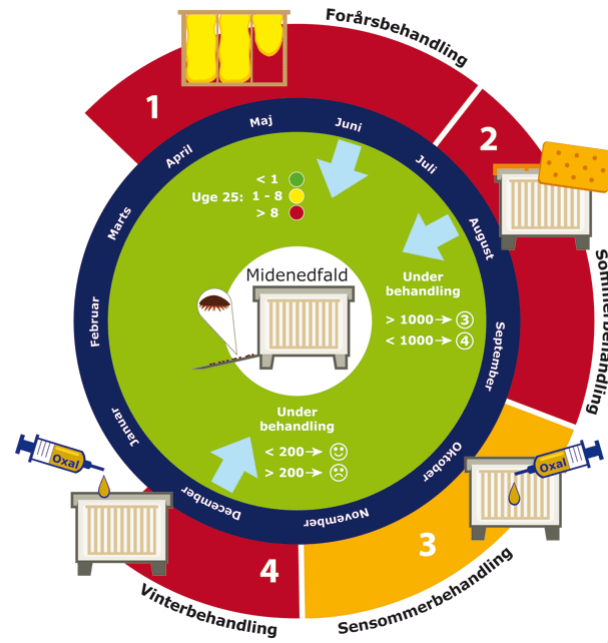
Regulation EU No 2019/6 article 4:

‘veterinary medicinal product’ means any substance or combination of substances which fulfils at least one of the following conditions:

- (a) it is presented as having properties for treating or preventing disease in animals;
- (b) its purpose is to be used in, or administered to, animals with a view to restoring, correcting or modifying physiological functions by exerting a pharmacological, immunological or metabolic action;
- (c) its purpose is to be used in animals with a view to making a medical diagnosis;
- (d) its purpose is to be used for euthanasia of animals;

Answer from the Commission:

- A substance presented as having properties for treating a disease, like varroosis, would meet the definition of ‘veterinary medicinal product’ laid down in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2019/6.
- Regulation (EU) 2019/6 aims at ensuring a high level of public and animal health and environmental protection. That Regulation stipulates that veterinary medicinal products within its scope can be placed on the market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted. Once a marketing authorisation has been granted, the veterinary medicinal products are also subject to pharmacovigilance.



THE BEEKEEPERS:

Organic methods with organic acids in pure form.

THE COMMISSION:
Marketed veterinary medicinal products



Legal use of varroa control products



NO CHANGES TO
LEGISLATION SINCE 2007



THE EU COMMISSION:
LIVESTOCK MAY ONLY BE
TREATED WITH
APPROVED MEDICINES



VARROA IS A DISEASE,
WHICH MEANS THAT VARROA
MUST BE TREATED WITH
MARKETED VETERINARY
PRODUCTS

The challenges of the regulation:

- Only very few products based on organic acids are registered and cannot stand alone.
- A product can legally only be used as stated in the instruction. Several products have not been tested in more countries and they are not to different conditions and beehives.
- Varroa control is complicated - multiple treatments are needed. Experience says that we need a varroa strategy, not just individual treatments.
- There may be a shift towards more use of synthetic pesticides in beekeeping.



Questionnaire on varroa control

Riccardo Pelani
Policy Advisor
WP Honey

19/12/2023

copa***cogeca**
european farmers european agri-cooperatives

Questionnaire

Are beekeepers allowed to use any varroa treatments (e.g. pure organic acids), or are they obliged to use only products that are registered for varroa control?

Nordic-Baltic region

FI, SE

Yes, they are allowed to use any varroa treatments.

DK

No, they are obliged to use only products that are registered for varroa control.



Mediterranean region

IT, ES, PT

No, they are obliged to use only products that are registered for varroa control.



Western/Central Europe

CZ, RO, AT, DE, SK, BE, NL

No, they are obliged to use only products that are registered for varroa control.



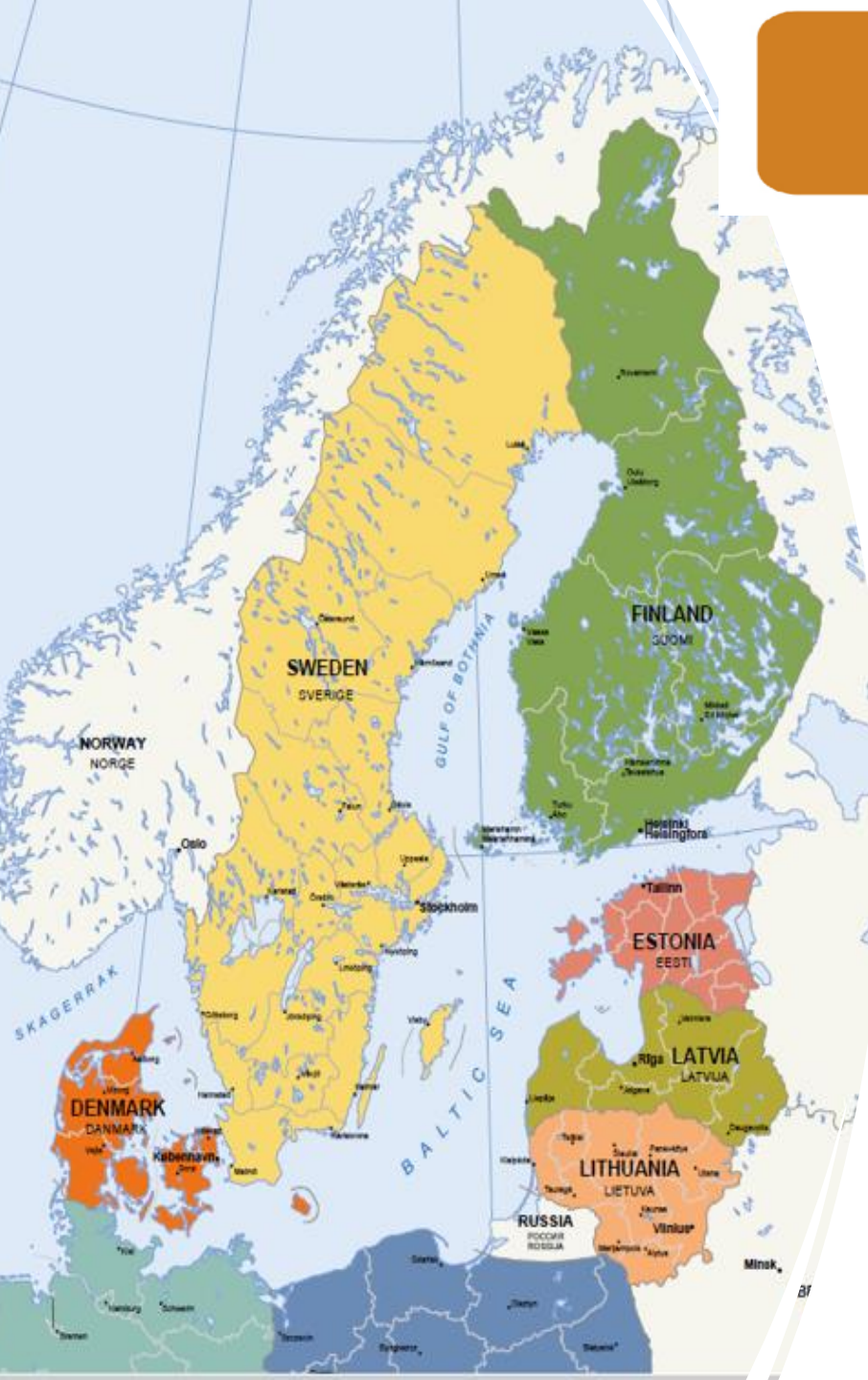
Questionnaire

What is the most widespread varroa control practice in your country?

Nordic-Baltic region

FI, SE, DK

Organic methods (e.g., organic acids, thymol).



Mediterranean region

ES, PT

Synthetic varroacides (e.g., amitraz).

IT

Both organic methods (e.g., organic acids, thymol) and synthetic varroacides (e.g., amitraz).



Western/Central Europe

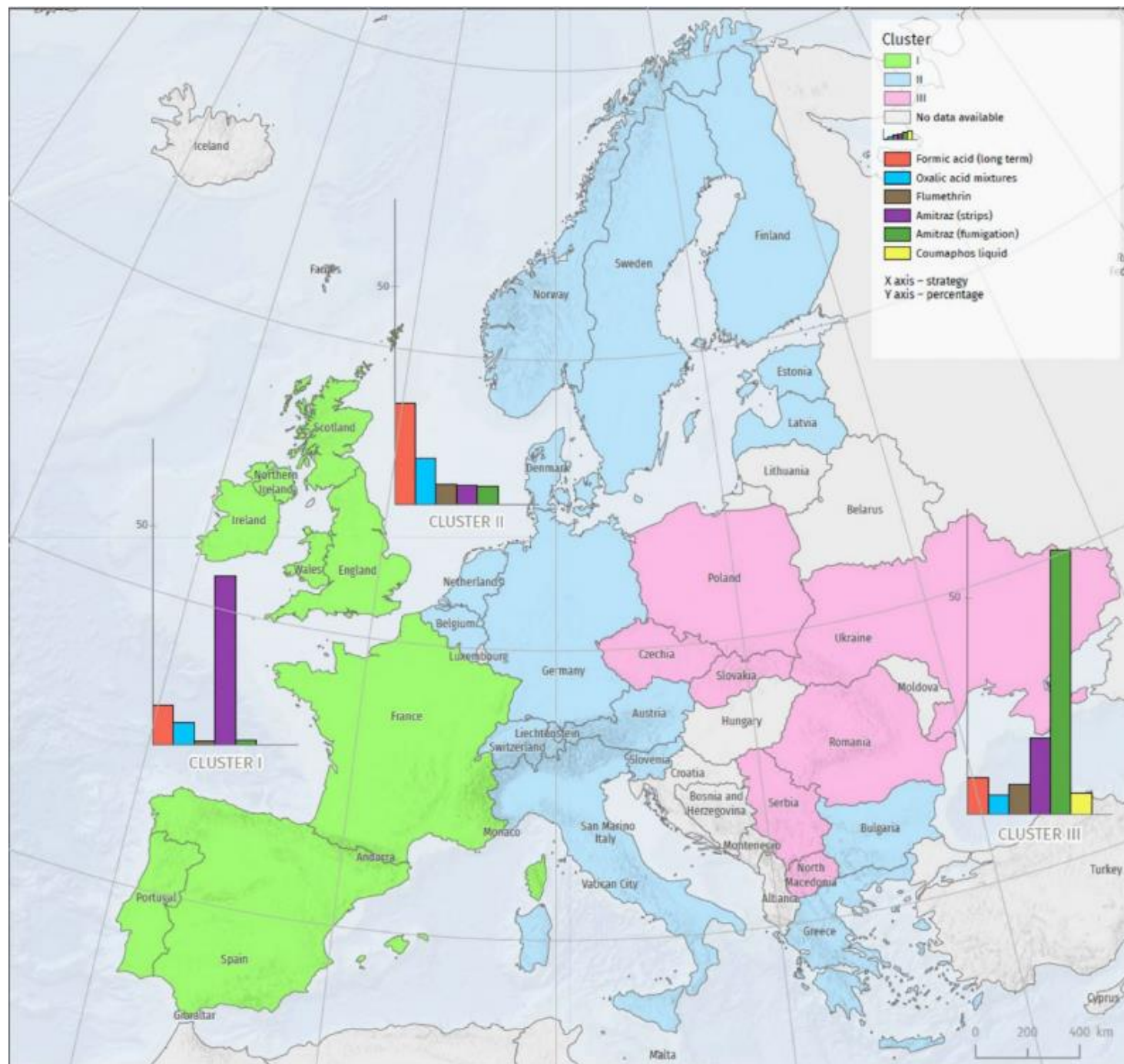
AT, NL

Organic methods (e.g., organic acids, thymol).

CZ, RO, DE, SK, BE,

Both organic methods (e.g., organic acids, thymol) and synthetic varroacides.





Journal of Pest Science (2023) 96:759–783
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10340-022-01523-2>

ORIGINAL PAPER



Spatial clusters of *Varroa destructor* control strategies in Europe

Robert Brodschneider¹ · Johannes Schlagbauer¹ · Iliyana Arakelyan² · Alexis Ballis³ · Jan Brus⁴ · Valters Brusbardis⁵ · Luis Cadahia⁶ · Jean-Daniel Charrière⁷ · Robert Chlebo⁸ · Mary F. Coffey⁹ · Bram Cornelissen¹⁰ · Cristina Amaro da Costa¹¹ · Ellen Danneels¹² · Jiří Danihlik¹³ · Constantin Dobrescu¹⁴ · Garth Evans¹⁵ · Mariia Fedoriak¹⁶ · Ivan Forsythe¹⁷ · Aleš Gregorc¹⁸ · Jes Johannesen¹⁹ · Lassi Kauko²⁰ · Preben Kristiansen²¹ · Maritta Martikkala²² · Raquel Martín-Hernández^{23,24} · Ewa Mazur²⁵ · Franco Mutinelli²⁶ · Solenn Patalano²⁷ · Aivar Raudmets²⁸ · Noa Simon Delso²⁹ · Jevrosima Stevanovic³⁰ · Aleksandar Uzunov³¹ · Flemming Vejsnæs³² · Anthony Williams³³ · Alison Gray³⁴

Questionnaire

**Approximately, how many marketed,
registered products are available in your
country?**

Mediterranean region



ES

4 synthetic and 5 organic.

IT

There are at least 15 products registered for Varroasis therapy. The active ingredients many fewer: Oxalic acid, Amitraz, Thymol, Fluvalinate, Flumethrin, Formic acid.

PT

In Portugal there are 18 veterinary medicines approved for the treatment of varroosis in honeybees with 6 active ingredients.

Western/Central Europe

AT, RO

18

NL

4

DE

15

SK

There is a big number of allowed products, list is on:
<https://www.svps.sk/zvierata/vcely.asp>. But there are just few used widely:

Avartin or Varidol (amitraz fumigation strips)

Ekopol and Ekovartin strips (with 4 types of essential oils)

Formidol pads (with formic acids)

Strips with oxalic acid and VarroMed solution.

BE

9



Nordic-Baltic region



FI

In Finland, supply intermediaries have not registered any products as medicinal substances for varroa control. In principle, selective pesticides (such as amitraz, apistan, etc.) or acid-based products could be used if someone were to import them into the country and register them for use in Finland.

SE

3 (Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar).

DK

2

Product	Active ingredience	Marketed in Denmark
Apivar	Amitraz	-
Polyvar	Flumethrin	-
Apiguard	Thymol	+
MaqsPlus	Myresyre	-
Oxybee / Bienenwohl	Oxalsyre	(+)
VarroMed	Oxalsyre + Myresyre	-

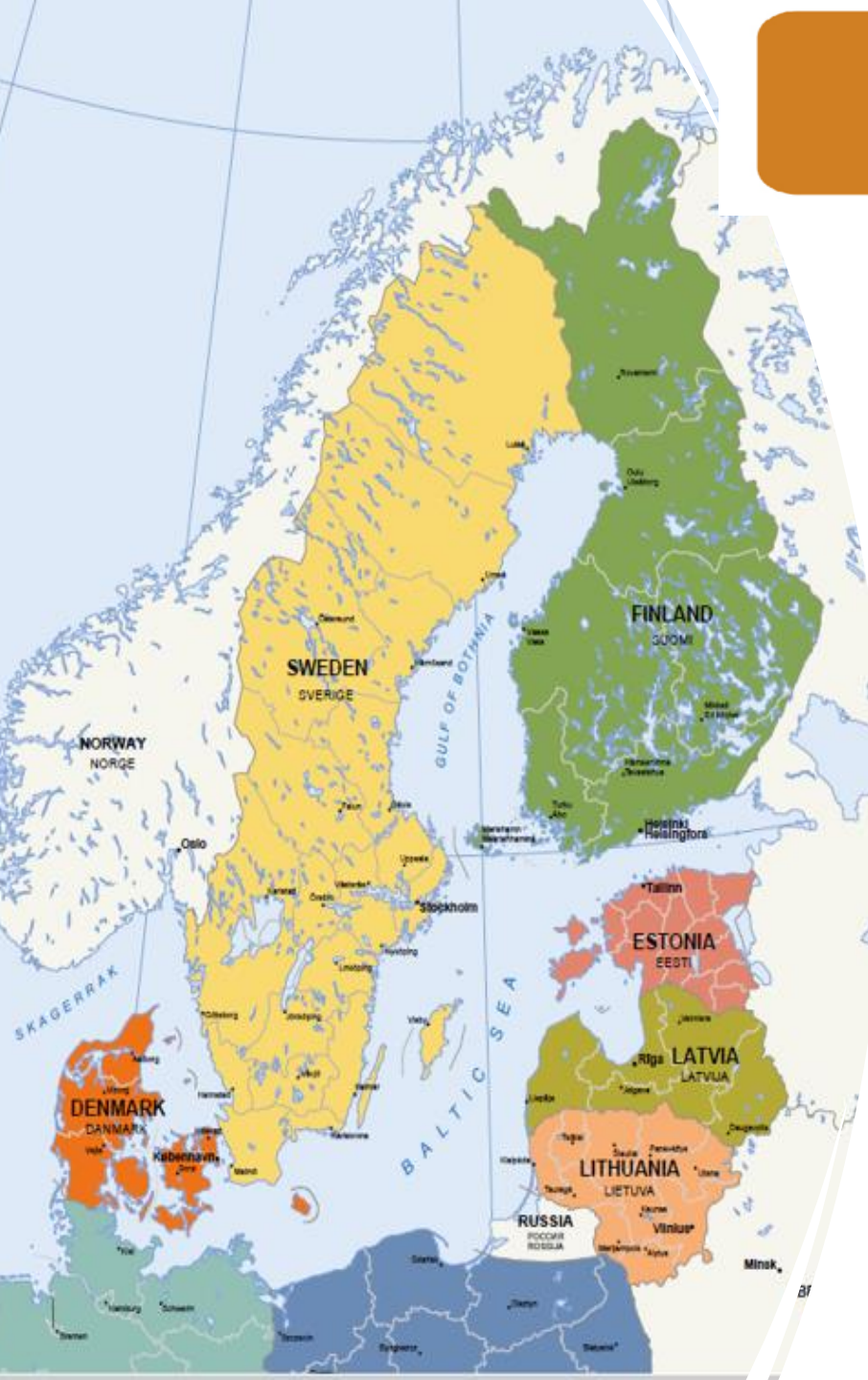
Questionnaire

If the beekeepers could choose freely, what would be their preferred option for varroa treatment?

Nordic-Baltic region

FI, SE, DK

Organic acids that they mix themselves.



Mediterranean region

ES, PT

Registered products as there is growing concern among beekeepers about the effectiveness and safety of so-called homemade treatments.

This concern, and the fact that there is a wide availability and variety of approved veterinary medicines on the market, means that there is no demand (and need) to resort to homemade treatments.

IT

Both registered products and organic acids that they mix themselves. There is an awareness that the control of the correct use of medicines is a guarantee of the food safety of products and therefore of their quality. However, often in the commercial formulations available on the market there are co-formulants (sugar, glycerol, water) that make their use not easy.



Western/Central Europe

AT, DE, SK

Registered products with the exception in DE of oxalic acid for sublimation, since it was not registered until September.

BE, NL

Organic acids that they mix themselves.

CZ

The beekeepers can choose freely between the authorised veterinary medicine products and their suppliers. There are plenty of preferences between more than 70.000 beekeepers in the country, so it is difficult to pick up a trend.



Questionnaire

**If any, what are the main problems experience
by beekeepers for using veterinary medicines
for varroa control?**

Nordic-Baltic region

FI

Availability: With Apistan, it was observed that the residues in the wax (and also in the honey) increased year by year. Varroa became resistant to the active ingredient in Apistan, and at that point, there was a shift to using natural acids.

SE

Prices.



Mediterranean region

ES

Lack of effectiveness.

PT, IT

Prices. In Italy, to date, there is an excessive gap between free active ingredients (see oxalic acid) and their registered commercial formulations. This situation is a critical issue that limits the widespread use of registered products. The fight against varroa has a non marginal impact on the costs of maintaining the hive. The availability of health products on the market is generally not problematic, currently there is no need for veterinary prescription. A problem is also posed by the inadequacy of the formulations on the market, e.g. the only product authorised for sublimation is inadequate due to its sugar content.



Western/Central Europe

AT, DE

Prices. In Germany, hardly any medicament needs an prescription. They are all available. There is no shortage. The prices of the medicaments can be reduced when buying them e.g. via the beekeeping club due to subventions. But the prices might be one reason why some prefer to use unregistered products such as technical formic acid.

BE, RO

Prices and availability.

NL

Prices, need for prescription.

CZ

Their efficacy in controlling the varroa mite, their mode of use (more or less work and disturbance of the colony), then the price.



The Danish Beekeepers' Association focus:

- that veterinary medicines based on organic acids and thymol are marketed in Denmark, which give beekeepers the best future options for varroa control, and preferably methods that are as close to current practice as possible

- in cooperation with other countries to continue the political process and challenge the EU's regulations, so that beekeepers have the best possible conditions for varroa control



Aiming to get the following approvals in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland:

- Varroxaal, for dripping, spraying and vaporizing
- Varroxaal 0.71g/g beehive powder
- Thymovar
- FORMIVAR® 60 and 85 Still checking the possibility of integrating for Denmark (In Germany only 60% is approved at the moment)

How long this will take and how quickly it will happen is now an open question.

EVALUATION

Deadline: 3rd of April

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14036-Animal-Health-Law-evaluation_en



Log in



EN English

Search on Europa

Search

Law

Animal Health Law – evaluation

[Have your say - Public Consultations and Feedback](#) > [Published initiatives](#) > [Animal Health Law – evaluation](#)

In preparation

Call for evidence

Feedback period

06 March 2024 - 03 April 2024

FEEDBACK: OPEN

About this initiative

Summary

To ensure food safety and animal health, the EU sets rules on transmissible animal diseases (the Animal Health Law).

This initiative will assess if those rules together with further detailed rules:

- meet their objectives
- are proportionate
- relate to current and emerging needs

Thank you