

EUROPEAN SPECIAL ALERT

EC wants bees to be treated by vets

Beekeepers start lobbying for exemption

The European Commission plans to make honeybee medications available only on prescription and therefore available only through vets. This new Directive is due to come into force in October 2005, but if the bee lobby acts now it may be possible to obtain an exemption for honeybees.

The plans for honeybee medications to be prescription-only are part of a new EC Directive (EC 2004/28/EC) which will apply to medicines for all food-producing animals. No exceptions have been made or planned, but beekeepers have been so alarmed at the new legislation that lobbying for an exemption for honeybees has begun.

Max Watkins, Technical Director of Vita-Europe said "This legislation could be disastrous for beekeeping, honey production and agricultural pollination in Europe. It will lead to an increase in treatment costs, encourage the use of unapproved products and result in the loss of bee colonies across Europe."

Dr Watkins continued: "Every beekeeping body I have spoken to opposes the legislation. It is vital that beekeepers in every European Union Member State lobby their relevant government authority to secure an exemption for honeybees from this legislation."

Why Directive 2004/28/EC is bad for beekeeping

- ◇ Vets in most European countries have little knowledge or experience of honeybees. Will beekeepers take hives to vets to obtain prescriptions, or call vets to attend their apiaries?
- ◇ The involvement of any other agency in dispensing bee treatments will increase costs of treatment which in turn will discourage the use of approved products and encourage the use of unapproved alternatives that can be unreliable and even dangerous.
- ◇ Existing approved honeybee treatments have been shown to offer no significant risk to humans. The need for prescriptions is therefore totally irrelevant.
- ◇ Anything that interferes with or inhibits honeybee treatment will be disastrous for the survival of bees, honey production and the pollination of agricultural crops and native flora.

Honeybees — vital to agriculture

In economic terms, honeybees are far more important for their role in pollination than in the production of honey. Here are some example statistics from the UK:

- 15.8 million — the value of honey and wax production in the UK
- 138.8 million — the value of honey bee pollination of crops in the UK
- at least 39 UK crops grown for their food or seed are insect-pollinated (honeybees and bumble bees usually outnumber all other insect pollinators)
- 32 other crops need insects for pollination
- wild plants benefit hugely from insect pollination.

Source: *The Value of Bees Report in the UK* by Carrick and Williams, 1998

The origin of Directive 2004/28/EC

The Review of the European legislation on veterinary medicinal products (Review 2001) concluded on 30 April 2004 with the publication of an amending Directive (2004/28/EC) and a new EU Regulation (No 726/2004).



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Who to lobby

To lobby for the exemption of bee treatments as prescription-only medicines, you should contact the relevant agency in your country. A letter to the EC itself may also help. We think that the addresses below are correct.

AUSTRIA

Bundesministerium für soziale Sicherheit und Generationen
Abteilung VIII/C19
Attn: Magister Obermayer
Radetzkystrasse 2, A-1030 Wien
Tel 0043/1/711 00-4655

BELGIUM

NL/FR Federal Public Service Health Food Chain Safety and Environment
Bischoffsheim 33, 1st floor
B-1000 Brussels
Tel +32 2 227 55 10

CZECH REPUBLIC

Ústav pro státní kontrolu veterinárních biopreparátů a léčiv
Hudcova 56a
621 00 Brno – Medlánky
Tel +420 541 210 022 024
E-mail uskvbl@uskvbl.cz

CYPRUS

Director of Veterinary Services
5 Larnaca Avenue
Flat 201,202; Block A
2101 Nicosia

DENMARK

Lægemiddelstyrelsen
Axel Heides Gade 1
DK-2300 København S
Tel +45 44 88 95 95
E-mail dkma@dkma.dk

ESTONIA

State Agency of Medicines
Ravila 19, 50411 Tartu
Tel +372 7 374 140
E-mail sam@sam.ee

FINLAND

National Agency for Medicines
Mannerheimintie 166
FIN-00301 Helsinki
Tel +358 9 47 334 1

FRANCE

AFSSA Agence nationale du médicament vétérinaire
B.P. 90203
35302 Fougeres cedex
Tel +33 02 99 94 78 60

GERMANY

Bundesinstitut für gesundheitlichen Verbraucherschutz und Veterinärmedizin, Fachbereich 6
Diedersdorfer Weg 1
D-12277 Berlin

GREECE

National Organisation for Medicines, Evaluation Department
284 Messogion Avenue 15562
Holargos, GR-15562 Athens

HUNGARY

Állatgyógyászati Oltóanyag-Gyógyszer-és Takarmányellenőrző Intézet
H-1107 Budapest, Szállás u. 8
PO Box H-1475 Budapest 10. Pf. 318
Tel +36 1 433 0330
E-mail info.aogyti@oai.gov.hu

IRELAND

Receipt & Validation Section
Irish Medicines Board
Block A, Earlsfort Centre
Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2
Tel +353 (1) 676 4971

ITALY

Ministero della Sanità
Dip. Alimenti, Nutrizione e Sanità
Pubblica Veterinaria, Piazzale Marconi
25, I-00144 Roma
Tel +39 06 59 94 35 79

LATVIA

Food and Veterinary Service,
Veterinary Medicinal Products Registration Division
Republikas Laukums 2, Riga, LV-1010
Tel +371 7095239

LITHUANIA

Lithuanian State Inspection on Veterinary Preparations, J. Naujalio g. 21b
LT-48332 Kaunas-26,
Tel +370 37 268129, 267455

LUXEMBOURG

Ministère de la Santé
Division Pharmacie et Médecine
Villa Louvigny, Allée Marconi
L-2120 LUXEMBOURG
Tel +352 478 55 95

MALTA

Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care
Palazzo Castellania,
Merchants Street,
Valletta - CMR 02
Tel: 21 224 071-7

POLAND

Urząd Rejestracji
Produktów Leczniczych, Wyrobów Medycznych
I Produktów Biobójczych
ul. Chelmska 30/34 00-725 Warszawa
Tel + 48 22 851 43 81

PORTUGAL

Direcção General de Veterinária
Lg da Academia Nacional de Belas Artes 2
1294-105 Lisboa

SLOVAKIA

Ústav štátnej kontroly veterinárnych biopreparátov a liečiv
Biovetská 34, 949 01 Nitra
Tel +421 37 6515 501-3
E-mail uskvbl@uskvbl.sk

SLOVENIA

Ministrstvo za zdravje, Agencija Republike Slovenije za zdravila in medicinske pripomočke
Kersnikova 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana

SPAIN

Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo
Agencia Española del Medicamento, Subdirección General de Medicamentos de Uso Veterinario,
Paseo del Prado 18-20,
28071 Madrid
Tel 91 586 18 69

SWEDEN

Kemikalieinspektionen
The National Chemicals Inspectorate
Esplanaden 3 A,
Box 2
172 13 Sunbyberg
Tel +46 (0)8 519 411 00
e-mail maritb@kemi.se

THE NETHERLANDS

Bureau Registratie Diergeneesmiddelen; Haagsteeg 2;
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Enterprise DG
Documentation Centre
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B - 1049 Brussels
Belgium
Fax +32 (0)2 296 99 30

What's happening in the UK

We know that a few EU countries have already started lobbying to try to ensure that bee medications do not become prescription-only.

The VMD (Veterinary Medical Directorate) in the UK has been lobbied by British beekeepers and has a clear understanding of the issue. It is committed to pressing the European Commission for an exemption of honeybees from the Directorate.

If your national agency dealing with the matter wishes to contact the UK VMD, the contact person is Heather Oliver
h.oliver@vmd.defra.gsi.gov.uk

NEWS
MITE

The newsletter for distributors of Vita (Europe) Ltd mite control products.

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