

Treating with Apilife Var in a Warré Hive

Regarding the question about using Apilife var in Warre hives, the best advice I can give you is to dose Apilife Var according to the internal volume of the hive, respecting the number and timing of applications.

Consider that for the treatment of a Dadant-Blatt of 10 honeycombs (internal volume of about 60 liters) it is necessary to apply one strip per week for 4 weeks (total of 4 strips).

Therefore for the Warré hive the amount of product to be applied each week will depend on how many boxes the hive is composed and its total volume.

The actual volume of a single Warré box unit is about 19 liters, quite small compared to most hives, and the brood is generally distributed over two boxes, so about 40 liters. I believe that in this case using Apilife Var according to the dosage directions on the label may be acceptable and not create any tolerability issues.

Apilife Var should be applied in the absence of a supers. As you noted it is thymol-based, which can alter the flavor of honey, but is harmless to bees and humans.

The management of Warré hives is somewhat different to usual framed hives.

There are no 'supers' on a Warré hive as the expansion is downwards, new boxes being placed beneath the brood chambers and the bee colony grown downwards as in a natural 'wild colony'.

The storage of surplus honey was once the brood area, which is eventually removed from the top of the hive and honey is collected by emptying the removed combs. The bees build all the combs naturally and no foundation is used; this method means that the bees renew all the combs regularly and frequently.

The vapors of thymol and the other active ingredients are heavier than air and therefore tend to drop downward, consequently the ideal spot to apply the product would be the top of the hive, where the honey that will later be harvested for consumption is stored.

It is therefore reasonable to treat the colony once the upper honey-containing boxes have been removed; in this way, the treatment would also approach the brood chamber, where there is the highest concentration of mites.

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