

TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL HEALTH STANDARDS  
COMMISSION

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CHAPTER 4.14.

OFFICIAL HEALTH CONTROL OF BEE DISEASES

Article 4.14.1.

**Purpose**

This chapter is intended to set out guidelines for *official health control* of bee *diseases*. These are needed for the control of endemic bee *diseases* at the country level and to detect incursions of exotic *diseases*, thereby ensuring safe *international trade* of bees, bee products and used apicultural equipment. The guidelines are designed to be general in nature and more specific recommendations or requirements are made in chapters on bee *diseases*.

Article 4.14.2.

**Overview**

In each country or region, official health control of bee *diseases* should include:

- 1) official *registration* of the *apiaries* by the *Veterinary Authority* or other ~~by the~~ *Competent Authority* in the whole country or region;
- 2) an organisation for permanent health *surveillance*;
- 3) approval of breeding *apiaries* for export trade;
- 4) measures for cleaning, *disinfection* and *disinfestation* of apicultural equipment;
- 5) rules precisely stating the requirements for issuing an *international veterinary certificate*.

Article 4.14.3.

**Official registration of the apiaries by the Veterinary Authority or other by ~~the~~ Competent Authority in the whole country or region**

The *registration* of *apiaries* is the first step in developing a regional management plan for bee *disease surveillance* and control. With knowledge of bee density and location it is possible to design valid sampling schemes, to predict the spread of *disease* and to design inspection programmes to target areas of high risk.

The official *registration* of *apiary* sites should be annual and may provide information such as the presumptive locations of the *apiary* sites in the next 12 months, the average number of colonies in each *apiary* site, and the name and address of the principal owner of the bees in the *apiary*.

The main *apiary* locations (places where the *bee hives* are located the longest time in the year) should be registered first, followed as far as possible by the seasonal *apiary* locations.

Article 4.14.4.

**Organisation for permanent official sanitary surveillance of apiaries**

Veterinary Authorities or other Competent Authorities of countries are requested to regulate the organisation for permanent official sanitary *surveillance* of *apiaries*.

Permanent official sanitary *surveillance* of *apiaries* should be under the authority of the Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authority and should be performed either by representatives of this *Authority* or by representatives of an approved organisation, with the possible assistance of bee-keepers specially trained to qualify as 'health inspectors and advisers'.

The official *surveillance* service thus established should be entrusted with the following tasks:

- 1) visit *apiaries*:
  - a) annual visits to an appropriate sample of *apiaries*, based on the estimated risk in the whole country or region, during the most appropriate periods for the detection of *diseases*;
  - b) additional visits to *apiaries* may be carried out for specific purposes including trade or transfer to other regions, or any other purpose whereby *diseases* could be spread;
- 2) collect samples required for the diagnosis of *diseases* and despatch them to a laboratory; the results of laboratory examinations should be communicated within the shortest delay to the Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authority;
- 3) apply hygiene measures, comprising, in particular, treatment of colonies of bees, as well as *disinfection* of the equipment and possibly the destruction of affected or suspect colonies and of the contaminated equipment so as to ensure rapid eradication of any *outbreak* of a *disease*.

Article 4.14.5.

#### Conditions for approval of breeding *apiaries* for export trade

Veterinary Authorities or other Competent Authorities of *exporting countries* are requested to regulate the conditions for approval of breeding *apiaries* for export trade.

The *apiaries* should:

- 1) have received, for at least the past two years, visits by a health inspector and adviser, carried out at least once a year using a *risk*-based approach during the most appropriate periods for detection of *listed diseases* of bees. During these visits, there should be a systematic examination of at least 10% of the hives containing bees and of the used apicultural equipment (especially stored combs), and the collection of samples to be sent to a laboratory and, depending on the situation of the *importing* and *exporting countries*, no positive results were reported to the Veterinary Authorities or other Competent Authorities for the relevant *listed disease* of bees;
- 2) be regularly sampled, depending on the epidemiological situation of the *importing* and *exporting countries*, and found free from the relevant *listed diseases* of bees. To achieve this, a statistically valid number of bee colonies should be examined by any method complying with the relevant chapters of the *Terrestrial Manual*.

Bee-keepers should:

- 3) immediately notify the Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authority of any suspicion of a *listed disease* of bees in the breeding *apiary* and in other epidemiologically linked *apiaries*;
- 4) not introduce into the *apiary* any bee (including pre-imago stages) or used apicultural equipment or product originating from another *apiary* unless that *apiary* is recognised by the Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authority to be of equivalent or higher health status or the used apicultural equipment or product has been treated in agreement with a procedure described in the relevant chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*;

- 5) apply special breeding and despatch techniques to ensure protection against any outside contamination, especially for the breeding and sending of queen-bees and accompanying bees and to enable retesting in the *importing country*;
- 6) collect at least every 30 days, during the breeding and despatch period, appropriate samples to be sent to a laboratory and all the positive results officially reported to the Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authority.

Article 4.14.6.

**Conditions for sanitation and disinfection or disinfestation of apicultural equipment**

Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authorities of countries are requested to regulate the use of products and means for sanitation and *disinfection* or *disinfestation* of apicultural equipment in their own country, taking into account the following recommendations.

- 1) Any apicultural equipment kept in an *establishment* which has been recognised as being affected with a contagious *disease* of bees should be subjected to sanitary measures ensuring the elimination of pathogens.
- 2) In all cases, these measures comprise the initial cleaning of the equipment, followed by sanitation or *disinfection* or *disinfestation* depending on the *disease* concerned.
- 3) Any infested or contaminated equipment which cannot be subjected to the above-mentioned measures should be destroyed, preferably by burning.
- 4) The products and means used for sanitation and *disinfection* or *disinfestation* should be accepted as being effective by the Veterinary Authority or other Competent Authority. They should be used in such a manner as to exclude any risk of contaminating the equipment which could eventually affect the health of bees or adulterate the products of the hive.

Article 4.14.7.

**Preparation of the international veterinary certificate for export**

This certificate covers hives containing bees, brood-combs, royal cells, used apicultural equipment and bee products.

This document should be prepared in accordance with the model contained in Chapter 5.10. and taking into account the chapters on bee *diseases*.