

Rwanda

Ministerial Order relating to Hygiene in Beekeeping and Modalities for Use of Toxic Substances

Ministerial Order 1 of 2014

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Commenced on 2 February 2015

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The Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources;

Pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 04 June 2003 as amended to date, especially in Articles 120, 121 and 201;

Pursuant to Law n° 54/2008 of 10/09/2008 determining the prevention and fight against contagious diseases for domestic animals in Rwanda, especially in Articles 139 and 140;

Pursuant to Law n° 30/2012 of 01/08/2012 governing agro-chemicals;

Pursuant to Law n° 25/2013 of 10/05/2013 determining the organization and functioning of beekeeping in Rwanda, especially in Articles 12 and 13;

After consideration and approval by the Cabinet, in its session of 09/06/ 2014;

HEREBY ORDERS:

Chapter One General provisions

Article One – Purpose of this Order

This Order relates to hygiene in beekeeping and modalities for use of toxic substances in beekeeping.

Article 2 – Definitions of terms

For the purpose of this Order, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- 1° **Appropriate beesuit:** a protective cloth a beekeeper uses as prescribed in the Ministerial instructions relating to positioning of beehives, honey harvesting equipment and issuance of beekeeping certificate;
- 2° **Competent authority:** veterinary service at the Sector level.

Chapter II Beekeeper hygiene

Article 3 – Washing hands

Before starting any beekeeping activity relating to harvesting, processing and packing of honey, a beekeeper shall wash hands with soap and running water thoroughly well and dry in the open air.

Article 4 – Use of a clean appropriate beesuit

Every beekeeper must use a clean beesuit and free from any exposure to other sources of food contamination, bee colonies or any of bee products.

Ministerial instructions shall determine the description of the beesuit of the staff in beekeeping activity.

Article 5 – Avoid sneezing and coughing over the hive

Every beekeeper must avoid sneezing and coughing over the hive and shall have a suitable method of disposing of body secretions.

Article 6 – Non contamination of the honey comb

Every beekeeper must avoid contaminating the honey comb that may be used.

Article 7 – Use of clean source of water

A beekeeper must use a clean source of water.

Article 8 – Regular washing of the gumboots of the beekeeper

Every beekeeper must wash his/her footwear regularly especially between colony inspections to avoid introduction of any contamination.

Chapter III

Hygiene of beehives and other equipment

Section One – Hygiene of beehives

Article 9 – Cleanliness of the beehives

Every beekeeper must always keep clean his/her beehive.

Every beekeeper must also scrub the beehives thoroughly well using a wired brush. Components of the beehive must also be washed using appropriate detergent.

Empty beehives and replacement parts of the beehives must be disinfected before bees are placed inside.

Article 10 – Spilling honey near the beehives

Every beekeeper must avoid spilling honey and its products near the beehives. Leaving honey of any origin where bees can access it is prohibited.

Article 11 – Regular inspection of the beehive

Every beekeeper must carry out regular inspections of the beehive to ascertain the condition and needs of the bees.

The beekeeper also must inspect the beehive during build-up periods when there is intense activity in the hive.

Article 12 – Removal of dirt from the vicinity of the beehives

Every beekeeper must remove all dirt, dustbins and rubbish from the vicinity of the apiary.

Article 13 – Use of clean water

Every beekeeper must use clean water for bees and hives. He/she shall also remove stagnant water that bees may access.

Section 2 – Hygiene of other beekeeping equipment

Article 14 – Cleaning the gloves

Every beekeeper must wash his/her gloves in soapy water to reduce the risk of spreading infection to bees.

Gloves also can be changed if considered necessary.

Article 15 – Cleaning the harvesting bucket or any other appropriate equipment

A beekeeper must clean the harvesting bucket or any other appropriate equipment at all times he/she is going to harvest honey.

Article 16 – Washing the bee brush

Every beekeeper must wash the bee brush and clean the kit box to avoid honey residues on them which may attract the bees to contaminated places.

Article 17 – Protect the equipment from the curiosity of and contact with other bees

Every beekeeper must protect any beekeeping equipment from curiosity and contact with any other bees which may be infected.

Article 18 – Burn all the unwanted combs

All unwanted combs or those identified with any infection must be burnt to avoid contamination with honey or any other beekeeping tool.

Chapter IV

Modalities for use of toxic substances in beekeeping and prevention of contamination in beekeeping

Section One – Use of toxic substances used in agriculture

Article 19 – Use of toxic substances in beekeeping

Any person who sprays toxic substances used in agriculture must do so only:

- 1° before the flowering period or after flowers have withered away;
- 2° if the bees cannot suffer any harmful effects;

- 3° if the toxic substance may not lead to death of bees;
- 4° if the substance may not intoxicate honey or any other honey product.

Article 20 – Seek relevant information before spraying toxic substances

Any person who intends to use a toxic substance shall seek necessary information from relevant authority before spraying the toxic substance.

Article 21 – Appropriate time for spraying toxic substances

Without prejudice to provisions of Article 20 of this Order, any person who intends to spray any toxic substance must do so in evening hours during sunset when the bees return to their hives.

However, any person who implements provisions of Paragraph One of this Article must always use fewer toxic substances in order to reduce bee mortality.

Section 2 – Prevention of contamination in beekeeping

Article 22 – Avoid the usage of used equipment

Every beekeeper must strive to purchase equipment described as follows:

- 1° a new beekeeping equipment in order to avoid using an old equipment;
- 2° a beekeeping equipment which is easy to clean and not difficult to treat in order to prevent spread of disease, pests and virus.

Article 23 – Remove infected honey combs

A beekeeper must remove contaminated combs completely by transferring them in one operation to the colonies with disease symptoms.

Contaminated honey combs must be burnt.

Article 24 – Prevent honey theft

To prevent honey theft by bees, a beekeeper must:

- 1° to remove all pieces of honey laden comb around the apiary;
- 2° to avoid the drying of honey combs;
- 3° to feed properly the bees;
- 4° not to maintain dead bees and weak colonies.

Article 25 – Close dead colonies

A beekeeper must close any dead colony so that bees do not enter, and equipment should be destroyed. A beekeeper must separate the diseased colony and healthy colony.

Article 26 – Prohibit exhibition of infected honey or any bee product

No person shall be permitted to exhibit honey or any bee product infected with any bee disease or any germs that may spread diseases to bees.

Article 27 – Regular inspection

A beekeeper must conduct through inspection of his/her colonies regularly in order to detect early signs of any contagious disease or pests that may attack bees.

The beekeeper also must inspect thoroughly every comb that is noticeably weak.

Article 28 – Declaration of a contagious disease or other pests

Any beekeeper who notices any signs of any contagious bee disease or any existence of pests that may transmit disease to bees, or any beekeeper who owns infected beekeeping equipment shall immediately declare it to the competent authority.

Chapter V

Taken measures in case of suspected or confirmed bee disease

Section One – Taken measures in case of a suspected bee disease

Article 29 – Taken measures in case of suspicion of any contagious disease in a hive

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 139 of the Law n° 54/2004 of 10/09/2008 determining the prevention and fight against contagious disease for domestic animals in Rwanda, the District Mayor shall, upon proposal by the veterinary service, order the following:

- 1° to identify and examine the bee colonies;
- 2° to take necessary samples for diagnosis by accredited laboratories in order to confirm or reject a suspected bee disease;
- 3° prohibit the introduction of hives whether populated or not, bees, queens, beekeeping equipment and bee products into the suspected apiary;
- 4° collect and burn dead bees;
- 5° to clean and disinfect or destroy all equipment used in the operation of the apiary following an appropriate procedure and using appropriate products;
- 6° to carry out an epidemiological survey.

The necessary samples provided for in item 2 of Paragraph One of this Article may be live or dead bees, brood, bee products and beekeeping equipment, as the case may be.

Article 30 – Epidemiological investigation

The epidemiological investigation carried out in case of a suspected contagious disease shall address:

- 1° the origin and possible mode of contamination of the apiary;
- 2° the movement of hives, bee colonies, bee products and all beekeeping equipment to or from the infected apiaries;
- 3° the identification of other infection suspected apiaries.

Measures mentioned in Paragraph One of this Article shall be lifted if the bee disease is over.

Article 31 – Measures taken in case of a confirmed contagious bee disease

In case an accredited laboratory confirms the existence of any contagious bee disease in an area, the Mayor of the District in which the infected area is located, upon proposal by the veterinary service, shall do the following:

- 1° to declare that the area is infected with a contagious bee disease;
- 2° to define the perimeter of the infected area and the number of all infected apiaries in the area;
- 3° to establish a protected zone, depending on the pathogen and a surveillance zone, in which the mentioned measures shall be applicable;
- 4° to apply measures prescribed on the Annex of this Order.

Article 32 – Measures taken in a protected zone

The following measures shall be taken in a protected zone:

- 1° to identify and examine apiaries;
- 2° to take samples for a diagnosis of possible presence of a contagious bee disease;
- 3° to prohibit any movement of hives whether populated or not, bees, queens, beekeeping equipment and bee products to or from a protected zone.

Article 33 – Measures applicable in the surveillance zone

The following measures shall be taken in surveillance zone:

- 1° to identify the apiaries;
- 2° to prohibit any movement of hives whether populated or not, to or from a surveillance zone.

Article 34 – Obligation to be present

The owners of hives or apiaries are required to attend or to be represented at the scheduled visits to provide the officers of sanitary control their collaboration, particularly the opening of hives and to provide the necessary equipment to diagnose the hives.

Chapter VI Final provisions

Article 35 – Repealing provision

All prior provisions contrary to this Order are hereby repealed.

Article 36 – Commencement

This Order shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official *Gazette* of the Republic of Rwanda.

Annex

Specific provisions applicable to bee contagious disease

The following specific measures are applicable to an infected or suspected apiary depending on the nature of a contagious bee disease:

A. While *Tropilaelaps* is confirmed in the apiary

- 1° Establishment of a protection area of three kilometers (3 km) around quarantine area
- 2° Establishment of a surveillance area of two kilometers (2 km) around the protection area
- 3° The District Mayor can order the destroying of affected bee colonies and beehives of infested apiaries
- 4° While authorized, it is necessary to carry out medical treatment, applied on veterinary prescription and according to National competent authority instructions.

B. While Small hive Beetle is confirmed in the apiary

- 1° Establishment of a protected area of at least five kilometers (5 km) around the quarantine area;
- 2° Establishment of a surveillance area of at least five kilometers (5 km) around the protected area;
- 3° The District Mayor may instruct the destruction of infected bee colonies and beehives of infected apiaries; and all beekeeping used in the contaminated apiaries;
- 4° If possible, and without prejudice to legal provisions relating to environmental protection, instructions of the competent national authority may instruct use of oil treatment within a radius of two meters (2 m) around the infected hives in the apiary;

C. While American foulbrood is confirmed in the apiary

- 1° Establishment of a protected area of at least three kilometers (3 km) around the quarantine area;
- 2° Establishment of a surveillance area of two kilometers (2 km) around the protection area;
- 3° The District Mayor may instruct the destruction of weak or infected bee colonies;
- 4° It is prohibited to use bee product for consumption;
- 5° The hive body, hive super out cover and all equipment used in the contaminated apiary shall be cleaned and disinfected through appropriate procedures or they may be destroyed as the District Mayor may instruct;
- 6° The viable bee colonies must be transferred in a healthy hive and receive treatment on the veterinary prescription.

D. While *Nosema* is confirmed in the apiary

- 1° Establishment of a protected area of at least three kilometers (3 km) around quarantine area;
- 2° Establishment of a surveillance area of at least two kilometers (2 km) around the protected area;
- 3° The District Mayor may instruct the destruction of infected bee colonies;
- 4° Consumption of beekeeping products from the infected apiary is prohibited;

- 5° Authorized medical treatment subject to veterinary prescription and in accordance with National competent authority instructions may be applied.