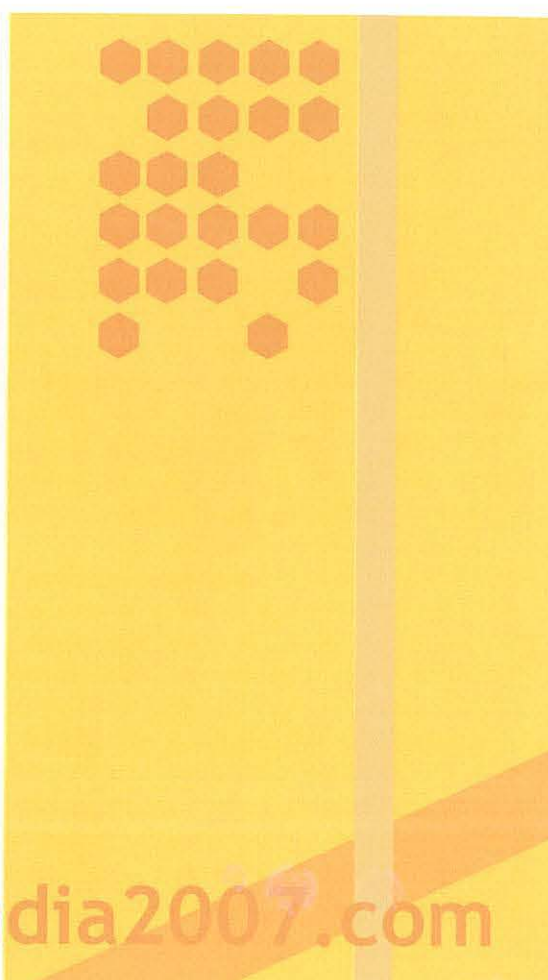
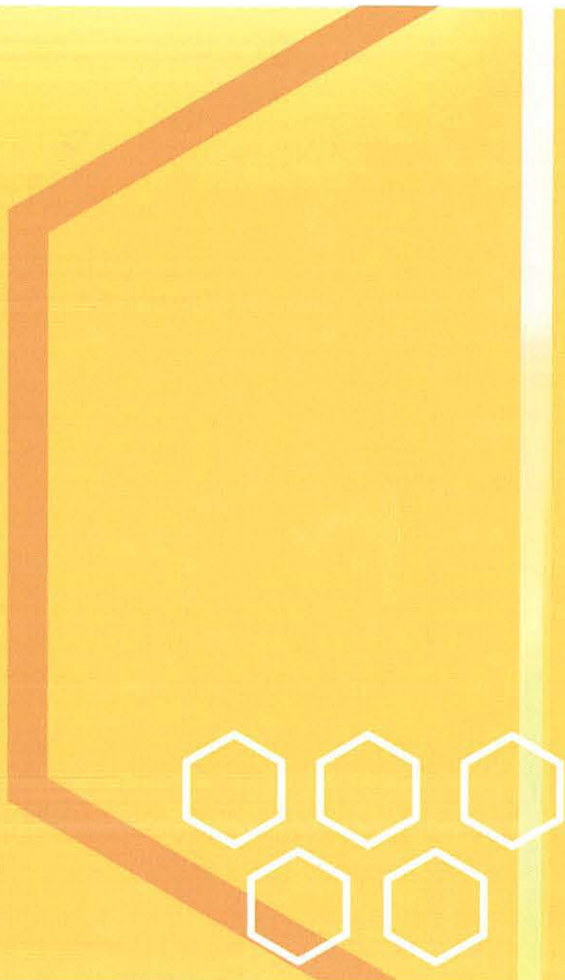




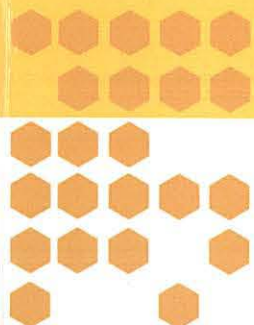
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## What Portuguese Beekeepers Do To Cope With Varroa

No 211

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This was the first study carried out nationwide to broadly describe Portuguese beekeepers and beekeeping operations, particularly regarding aspects expected to impose selection pressure on Varroa populations. Therefore, approximately 1200 interviews/enquiries were carried out/answered by beekeepers evenly distributed across the continental part of the country.

As an overview of the main results we obtained, the following statements can be made. The average Portuguese beekeeper is a 56 years old male. Most beekeepers (62%) have less than 4 years of official basic education, and 73% of them have never been involved in any kind of specific beekeeping training. On average, each beekeeper maintains 2 apiaries, where he/she keeps a total mean number of 48 colonies. The most used hive models are the country-specific “Lusitana” (38%, mostly used in northern Portugal) and “Reversivel” (38%, particularly more used in southern Portugal). Twenty per cent of our beekeepers keep their colonies in Langstroth hives. Most beekeepers (83%) yearly replace 3 old drawn combs by newer wax foundations sheets, particularly during spring time. Regarding homologated treatments available during 2002 to 2004, Apivar<sup>®</sup> was globally preferred to Apistan. Surprisingly, 55% of our beekeepers repeatedly adopted a single active substance throughout all that period (either amitraz or fluvalinate). Seventy seven per cent of our beekeepers reported two annual treatments against Varroa. These are predominantly applied for 4 to 6 weeks, mainly between January/March (78 % of enquired beekeepers) and, later on, in July/September (70%, after honey harvest).