On 29 January 2013 the US Environmental Protection Agency approved Georgia’s application to allow the sale and use of two new Varroa miticides - Apivar (amitraz) and HopGuard (hop beta acids) - for the calendar year 2013. Products must be used in strict compliance with label directions. Both products are under review for full national registration.

The Environmental Protection Agency hereby grants a specific exemption under the provisions of section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, as amended, to the Georgia Department of Agriculture for the use of amitraz strips (Apivar®) to control the varroa mite, (Varroa destructor) in honeybee colonies. This authorization is subject to the conditions and restrictions outlined below, as well as those specified in your request submitted to the EPA.

1) The Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA) is responsible for ensuring that all provisions of this specific exemption are met. GDA is also responsible for providing information in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §166.32(a). Accordingly, EPA headquarters and the EPA Region 4 office shall be immediately informed of any adverse effects resulting from use of this chemical in connection with this exemption. In accordance with 40 CFR §166.32(b), a final report summarizing the results of this program must be submitted to EPA within 6 months following the expiration of this exemption. In the final report, document performance issues received by the Georgia Department of Agriculture due to the development of amitraz resistance in the target pest.

2) Apivar® is an unregistered product (EPA File Symbol 87243-R) formulated as a sustained release plastic impregnated with 3.33% amitraz (0.5 g active ingredient (a.i.) per strip, manufactured by WJOLAB for Veto-Pharma S.A. may be applied. All applicable directions, restrictions, and precautions on the product label as well as the section 18 use directions submitted with your January 15, 2013 application must be followed.

3) A maximum of 252,000 strips treated with amitraz may be used.
4) To control varroa mite, remove honey supers before application of Apivar®. Use 2 Apivar® strips per brood chamber. Separate the double strip and hang each strip between two comb frames inside the brood area or the bee cluster, with a minimum distance of two frames between strips. Suspend Apivar® strips in the brood chamber in such a way that the bees can walk on both sides of the strips. Leave strips inside the hive for 42 days, and then remove. In case of movement of bees inside the beehive away from the strips, reposition the strips into the bee cluster, and leave strips in place for 14 more days before removal. Strips must be removed after a maximum of 56 days. Do not re-use the strips.

5) A maximum of two treatments, one in the spring and one in the fall, may be made per year if varroa mite infestations reach treatment threshold. Apivar® strips may not be used when honey supers are present. Honey supers cannot be placed until 14 days after strip removal.

6) Applicators must wear protective (chemical-resistant) gloves when handling treated strips.

7) Total residues of amitraz in honey and honeycomb (beeswax) are not expected to exceed 0.2 ppm and 9 ppm, respectively. A time-limited tolerance is in the process of being established to support this section 18 use pattern.

8) This exemption expires December 31, 2013.

9) Unused strips should be stored in a cool, dark area. Any unused, unregistered product must either be returned to the manufacturer or distributor in unopened packaging or disposed of in accordance with the Resource Conservation Recovery Act following the expiration of this emergency exemption.

This is the first time an emergency exemption has been granted to the Georgia Department of Agriculture for this use under the FIFRA section 18 program. A section 3 registration is currently under review. Therefore, progress toward registration is sufficient at this time.

Any future correspondence in connection with this authorization shall refer to file symbol 13-GA-02.
The Environmental Protection Agency hereby grants a specific exemption under the provisions of section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, as amended, to the Georgia Department of Agriculture for the use of potassium salt of hop beta acids (HopGuard®) in honeybee colonies to control varroa mites. Use of potassium salt of hop beta acids under this emergency exemption program also allows application to packaged bees prior to installation in colonies for bees that are used to start new honeybee colonies. This authorization is subject to the conditions and restrictions outlined below, as well as those specified in your request submitted to the EPA.

1) The Georgia Department Agriculture (GDA) is responsible for ensuring that all provisions of this specific exemption are met. GDA is also responsible for providing information in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §166.32(a). Accordingly, EPA headquarters and the EPA Region 4 office shall be immediately informed of any adverse effects resulting from use of this chemical in connection with this exemption. In accordance with 40 CFR §166.32(b), a final report summarizing the results of this program must be submitted to EPA within 6 months following the expiration of this exemption or prior to requesting another specific exemption for this use.

2) The unregistered product, HopGuard®, assigned (EPA File Symbol 83623-R), containing 16% potassium salt of hop beta acids, manufactured by Beta Tec Hop Products, a subsidiary of John I. Haas, Inc., may be applied. All applicable directions, restrictions, and precautions on the container label as well as the section 18 use directions submitted with your January 18, 2013 application and amendment request dated January 28, 2013 must be followed.

3) A maximum of 378,000 strips treated with potassium salt of hop beta acids may be used.
4) A maximum of six treatments may be made per year (spring, summer or fall). Application timing should be based on the levels of varroa mite observed in the colony. This limit includes all applications to the package (if applicable) and to the colony.

5) Strips must be applied at the rate of one strip per five deep combs covered with bees in each brood super or for example, two strips per ten frame brood super (chamber) when all combs are covered with bees. Strips are to be placed only in the brood chamber (not in the honey super). Folded strips must be opened and hung over one of the center brood frames near the middle of the frame with one-half of the strip on each side of the frame. If using a second strip, apply it to an adjacent center frame about four inches away from the first strip. Do not lay the strips on top of the frames. Twelve strips or approximately 23.04 grams of potassium salt of hop beta acids (a maximum of six applications per year) per ten frame brood super (chamber) is allowed. As an advisory and for optimal results, apply HopGuard® when little or no brood is present in the hive.

6) Applicators must wear protective (chemical-resistant) gloves when handling treated strips.

7) In consideration of the use directions and available exposure data, the application program will not result in any food residues. Residue data suggest that quantifiable levels of potassium salt of hop beta acids are not expected to be present in edible honey when the product is used according to these section 18 use directions. Therefore, a tolerance will not be established to support this section 18 use pattern.

8) Honey and wax should not be harvested from the brood chambers. Users may only harvest honey and wax from the honey supers.

9) Unused strips should be stored in a cool, dark area. Any unused, unregistered product must either be returned to the manufacturer or distributor in unopened containers or disposed of in accordance with the Resource Conservation Recovery Act following the expiration of this emergency exemption.

This is the second year that the Georgia Department of Agriculture has requested an emergency exemption for this use under the FIFRA section 18 program. IR-4 and the registrant are working toward completing the requisite steps needed for full registration. Therefore, adequate progress toward registration is being made at this time.

In the event that an emergency exemption for this use is requested in the future, the Agency is making a preliminary determination that this program is eligible for the streamlined recertification application process under 40 CFR 166.20(b)(5).

Any future correspondence in connection with this authorization shall refer to file symbol 13-GA-01.