



factsheet 04

Community-validated Best Beekeeping Practices

Record-keeping, Bee feeding and watering, and European foulbrood

Introduction

This factsheet details the final validation results for the **third set** of Best Beekeeping Practices.

Developed in 2025 through the B-THENET project, these practices were co-created by a diverse group of beekeepers, advisors, researchers, and experts.

The focus of this third set was on **Record-keeping** and **Bee feeding and watering** (categorised as Good Beekeeping Practices, GBPs), along with **European foulbrood** (a Biosecurity Measure in Beekeeping, BMB).

This work builds upon two previous sets of practices already established by the project:

The first set covered **Apiary set-up and management/maintenance** (GBPs) and **Varroosis** (BMBs).

(Read factsheet 02 | Validating Best Beekeeping Practices)

The second set focused on **Colony set-up and management/maintenance** and **American Foulbrood**.

(Read factsheet 03 | Co-creating Best Beekeeping Practices)



Terms and definitions

Good Beekeeping Practices (GBPs)

Integrative activities that beekeepers apply for on-apiary production to attain optimal health for humans, honey bees and the environment.

Biosecurity Measures in Beekeeping (BMBs)

Operational activities implemented to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of specific honey bee disease agents.

Best beekeeping practices (BBPs)

Good Beekeeping Practices (GBPs) and Biosecurity Measures in Beekeeping (BMBs) that have been adapted to a specific geographical context (e.g., different climatic and environmental conditions) and a specific beekeeping context (e.g., different bee genetics, beekeeping equipment, and diseases), and therefore represent the state of the art of beekeeping for that given area.



What happened in 2024–2025

In 2025, **25 Good Beekeeping Practices** and **Biosecurity Measures** were developed across three main themes: "**Record-keeping**" (8 practices), "**Bee feeding and watering**" (11 practices), and "**European foulbrood**" (8 practices). The 13 National B-THENET Centres, spanning 13 EU countries, then adapted these core practices into their national languages. This effort produced **325 distinct practices**, each customised to reflect local beekeeping conditions. These were shared on B-THENET's online platform from December 2024 to June 2025, inviting European beekeepers and advisors to actively participate in their refinement.

Who was involved

Beekeepers and advisors from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden were invited by their National B-THENET Centres to participate.

When

The exchange and validation phase occurred between December 2024 and June 2025.

How

Each practice was carefully assessed, refined, and integrated to make sure it aligned with the specific realities of beekeeping in each country. During exchange events, beekeepers and advisors voted "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" on the Exchange Platform to show whether they agreed with the description of each practice.

Methodology

A blend of online and in-person meetings was used to validate the 25 practices on the Exchange Platform. This process relied on platform users, including beekeepers and advisors, to assess how comprehensive the practices were and how well they aligned with national beekeeping approaches. Users provided feedback by adding comments, asking questions, and sharing tips, and also registered their agreement or disagreement with a "thumbs up/thumbs down" vote.

Rate this practice! 👍 14 👎 0

From December 2024 and June 2025, the Exchange meetings organised by the 13 National B-THENET Centres enabled final validation through collaborative enhancements and voting by beekeepers and advisors using the platform feature.



Validation criteria

At the end of June 2025, practices were considered validated only if they met three criteria:

- Each national-level practice received at least 10 votes.
- The EU beekeeping and advisor community on the platform provided $\geq 75\%$ positive votes.
- National B-THENET Centres confirmed the readiness of Best Beekeeping Practices for migration to the Repository Platform, having been duly validated by beekeepers (both online and on-field), advisors, and other stakeholders.

To learn more about how the National Centres evaluated the best beekeeping practices, you can find the full methodology in our [factsheet 01 | Methodology for the Analysis of Practices](#).



Results

All 325 practices successfully passed the validation process, earning the official designation of "Best Beekeeping Practices" (BBPs). The complete list of these validated practices, which incorporates contributions from all 13 National B-THENET Centres, is now accessible on the B-THENET Repository Platform in 13 languages. Going forward, these practices will be used as certified training material for beekeepers and advisors across the EU.

You can access the BBPs here:

- [Good Beekeeping Practices: Record-keeping](#)
- [Good Beekeeping Practices: Bee feeding and watering](#)
- [Biosecurity Measures: European Foulbrood](#)

The following list contains the **Best Beekeeping Practices** that were validated in 2025 by participants of the B-THENET project.

Category: GOOD BEEKEEPING PRACTICES

Theme: "Bee Feeding and Watering"

Practice container: "Feeding" / "Avoid Robbing" / "Wintering (Food)" / "Hygiene" / "Watering" / "Colony management"

	AT	BE	DE	DK	EL	ES	HR	HU	IT	PL	SE	SI	SK
01 Only use well recognized food types	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
02 Do not feed the bees with honey, pollen or supplements from dead colonies and only if there is clear absence of pathogens	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
03 Provide nucleus and swarms with adequate food supply	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
04 How to provide artificial feeding during times of shortage	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
05 Do not heat sugar solutions over tap-warm temperature	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
06 Reduce risk of robbing	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
07 How to stop robbing, once it occurs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
08 How to provide artificial feeding for wintering	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
09 Clean the feeders after feeding the bees	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
10 Provide a constant water source	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
11 Choose the right feeder for your needs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Category: GOOD BEEKEEPING PRACTICES

Theme: "Record-Keeping"

Practice container: "Apiary management" / "Veterinary medicines and Disease management" / "Colony management" / "Hive Products" / "Monitoring Tools" / "Characteristics/selection"

	AT	BE	DE	DK	EL	ES	HR	HU	IT	PL	SE	SI	SK
01 Identify your apiary and colonies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
02 Record the health status of the colonies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
03 Be informed about currently authorised products in your country	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
04 Marking of hives that need subsequent attention	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
05 Keep records of breeding activities and colony conditions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
06 Record harvest and processing data	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
07 Use a recording solution that fits to your needs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
08 Record characteristics of honey bee queen	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Category: BIOSECURITY MEASURES

Theme: "European Foulbrood"

Practice container: "Prevention" / "Disinfection of materials of EFB- contaminated colonies / "Detection" / "Management of hives that show clinical symptoms of EFB"

	AT	BE	DE	DK	EL	ES	HR	HU	IT	PL	SE	SI	SK
01 Do not move used frames/bees/materials/feeds from colonies with EFB to healthy colonies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
02 Inform your neighbours about EFB at your apiary	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
03 How to manage asymptomatic colonies when EFB cases have been detected in the apiary or in other hives of the same beekeeper	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
04 Disinfect/incinerate the contaminated beekeeping equipment and hive materials of EFB symptomatic colonies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
05 Detection of EFB typical signs and laboratory analysis	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
06 Make a (partial) shook swarm in case of EFB clinical signs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Glossary: Country Codes

AT	BE	DE	DK	EL	ES	HR	HU	IT	PL	SE	SI	SK
Austria	Belgium	Germany	Denmark	Greece	Spain	Croatia	Hungary	Italy	Poland	Sweden	Slovenia	Slovakia

These practices reflect the national beekeeping methods of the participating countries, highlighting differences due to climate, environment, bee genetics, equipment, and diseases. This provides beekeepers and advisors with verified knowledge tailored to local conditions, created with their active input.



Conclusion

Available in 13 languages on the Repository Platform of the project, the 325 Best Beekeeping Practices include step-by-step protocols, images, tags (e.g., climatic area, tools and supplies, production line, etc.), links to innovations, and scientific references.

These validated Best Beekeeping Practices will be used as training materials, providing both national and international certification through B-THENET Centres.

Future efforts will focus on harmonising these practices in English, detailing variations across the project countries.

Want to know more?

These are the themes being discussed within B-THENET from 2022 to 2026.

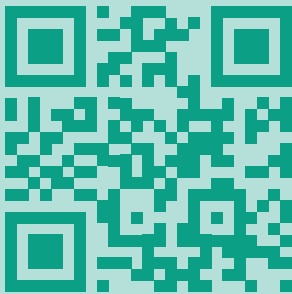
ROUND	YEAR	THEME	CATEGORY
01	2023	Apiary set-up and management/maintenance	Good Beekeeping Practices (GBPs)
		Varroosis	Biosecurity Measures in Beekeeping (BMBs)
02	2024	Colony set-up and management/maintenance	Good Beekeeping Practices (GBPs)
		American foulbrood	Biosecurity Measures in Beekeeping (BMBs)
03	2025	Record-keeping	Good Beekeeping Practices (GBPs)
		Bee feeding and watering	
		European foulbrood	Biosecurity Measures in Beekeeping (BMBs)
04	2026	Routine (preventive) hygiene practices + Miscellaneous	Good Beekeeping Practices (GBPs)
		Nosemosis + Small Hive Beetle + Invasive Vespids Management + Miscellaneous	Biosecurity Measures in Beekeeping (BMBs)

What is B-THENET?

B-THENET is the first EU thematic network for sustainable beekeeping.

B-THENET brings together different actors and their expertise to co-create and share knowledge to find applicable solutions for EU beekeepers.

Join our Network:



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Our consortium

