# 3: Interacting with an experienced beekeeper:

You are at the BIG STATE CLUB meeting. The State Apiarist does a 45- minute presentation on *varroa* control. In the Q&A that follows, an experienced beekeeper, who everyone knows, stands up and states:

” I’ve been keeping bees for 20 years and you don’t need to mess with any of that. Just spring and fall put a shop towel with glycerin and Oxalic Acid in your hives and your bees will do great. You can get the acid at the hardware store- they sell it as “Wood Bleach”. All the instructions are on YouTube. The government even approved it last year!”

Master Beekeeper’s opinions matter! Sometimes not speaking out endorses ideas presented by others. MB’s need to consider the audience and *THEIR* ability to judge presented ideas.

What strategies/or points could you make to diffuse this situation?

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*A correct answer will include many of the following points.*

*Answer should include at least* ***4*** *of these points:*

*\** The United States, as other countries, has a system in place for approving the use of pesticides. The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) administers an act, (FIFRA) that requires a label stating how pesticides are to be used, although there are some exemptions. Oxalic Acid is not one of the exempted products.

\* On every pesticide label there is a notice,” It is a violation of Federal law to use this product in a manner inconsistent with it’s labeling.”

\*Wood bleach sold at hardware stores would not include a pesticide label or instructions on how to use the product as a pesticide.

\*The only EPA - registered Oxalic Acid (OA ) product for suppression of *varroa* mites on honey bees is ‘API-Bioxal’ (TM)

\*There is a label for Oxalic Acid. It was supplemented last year, removing some use restrictions. Additional amendments to the current label are still being finalized. Use the label on the current product you have purchased.

\* There are three ways OA may be legally used. The ‘shop-towel’ method is not one.

\* Also on the legal OA label is the statement, “Apply only when monitoring indicates treatment is required.”

\* Randy Oliver, a citizen-scientist commercial beekeeper in California, who publishes the results of his experiments with this method, has the permissions/permit(s) required to experiment with various deliveries of pesticides legally. Randy often includes “works in progress” on his website. This “shop-towel” experimental methodology is not approved by the EPA for general use.