

## Basic Guidelines

### for Inspecting Honey Bee Hives and Prescribing Antibiotics as a Veterinarian

1. **A veterinarian needs to establish a veterinary client relationship (i.e. visit the apiary in person) before they can write a prescription for an antibiotic.** It is NOT okay for a veterinarian to write a prescription without a prior relationship to the client.
  - a. However, the veterinarian does not need to visit the hive every time. In order to establish a relationship, the veterinarian needs to visit the apiary at least once a year. After the initial visit, the beekeeper can call or email the vet with questions.
2. In a **commercial apiary (>250 colonies)**, a veterinarian should inspect at least **10% of hives**.
3. Veterinarians need to **report all observed diseases to the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Apiary Team** ([bees@mass.gov](mailto:bees@mass.gov)).

*These resources were created by UMass Extension, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture and The Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University.*

**For more honey bee veterinary resources visit:**

<https://aq.umass.edu/resources/pollinators/resources-for-veterinarians>

**To learn more about the project visit:**

<https://aq.umass.edu/resources/pollinators/research-projects-at-umass/ma-bee-veterinarian-project>