



National Bee Unit Southern Region

Information Sheet 11

Open Mesh Floors

The use of open mesh floors has been advocated by many beekeepers for years. The reasons given are legion but one is their use to help control varroa mite levels within a honeybee colony. Researchers advise us that about 20% of varroa mites hatching from brood with their host bees will fall off within three days of emergence. Though many of these mites may be the least viable, indications are that it is a cross section of the mites that fall. Older mites also have a tendency to fall off bees. With the use of open mesh floors most of these will fall out of the hive and be unable to return.

1. Why should I consider using them?

As part of an Integrated Pest Management system to control varroa the use of open mesh floors may help to slow mite population growth.

2. Are there other benefits?

Open mesh floors can be adapted to accept floor inserts so that mite populations can be calculated by means of natural mite mortality. This enables the beekeeper to monitor at the times of year that he wishes and leave the floor 'open' at other times. This helps to prevent wax moth problems, which are often encountered when using conventional varroa floors.

3. Can the efficacy of varroa control be improved?

Together with the use of dusts such as icing sugar, talc etc., the drop of mites may be substantially increased. However further work needs to be done in this area to ascertain its effectiveness.

4. Where can I obtain open mesh floors?

Some equipment manufacturers are offering these for sale. They can be made easily. The plan, overleaf, can be adapted to suit your needs. This drawing suits top bee space. If you use bottom bee space the lathe between the mesh and brood box should be reduced to 10 mm. This helps to prevent the build up of brace comb between frames and the mesh panel.

MATERIALS FOR 1 FLOOR -

75mm x 25mm x 2m long PLANED WOOD
 6 x 6 x 1260
 30 x 6 x 1350

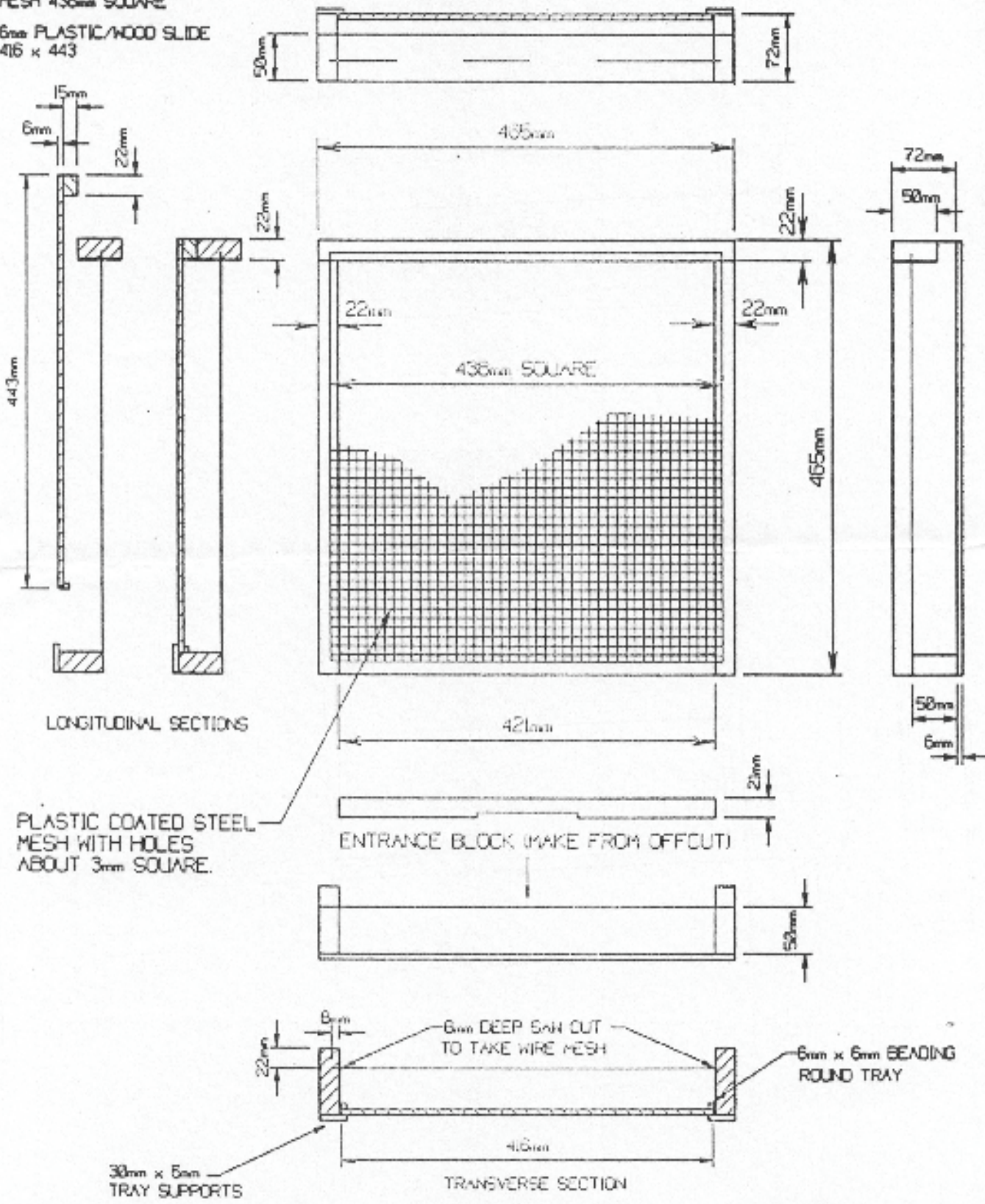
{ 72 x 22 x 465 - 2 No.
 50 x 22 x 465 - 2 No.
 22 x 22 x 420 - 1 No.
 22 x 15 x 420 - 1 No.

VARROA/OPEN FLOOR

THIRD ANGLE PROJECTION

EPOXY COVERED WIRE
 MESH 436mm SQUARE

6mm PLASTIC/WOOD SLIDE
 416 x 443



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