

## HONEY MARKET IN UGANDA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Honey production level of Uganda stand at 4000 metric tones. In 1999 Uganda honey beekeeper has recorded about 4213666 KGs of comb honey from 769133 hives owned by 70,162 bee-farmers. Many of the honey are consumed at home and local beer brewing bars. Uganda honey products center, feasibility report show that only 100 metric tones of honey sold to local markets, export to foreign market is amounted to 3 metric tones, a lot remain without market. Lot of honey continues to flow into the country from higher honey potential south Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.). This inflow of honey from the neighboring countries cause change in local price 3000-5000ushs to 800- 4000 ushs per kg as per now (\$1.5 – 4 and \$0.70 – 3). Export price U.S.\$ 1325 at Mombassa port. Lot of the honeys being produce from local hives, such as logs bamboos and holed trees. Thus the honey quality control measures remain the biggest issue in the honey industry. The government polices, plan for modernization of agriculture and investment, if amplify with involvement of investors and donor support, will lead to remarkable changes.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Uganda is honey potential country, with average production estimated between 100,000 – 200,000 metric tones of honey per year.

Most of the honey is being consumed at homestead, local markets give high prices for well-prepared honey. Due to high demand of honey in local market, Uganda market is receiving a lot of honey flow from neighboring countries such as Sudan and democratic republic of Congo DRC. The inflow of honey, especially from south Sudan amounted nearly 60% of honey in Ugandan markets.

### **HONEY PRODUCTION**

Traditional Beekeeping and honey hunting, both generate a product that is a mixture of broken, beeswax, comb honey and depend on the harvesting technique used, honey mixture of bee larvae and pupae and pollen are either consumed by beekeepers family or put in to jerrycan and sell to local brewer industries. Beekeepers are not aware of the

potential value of their wax, as they sell it along with their honey and are encouraged to consider it as a waste product.

Resource for bees and forage are not perceived as limiting factors. Farmers do not say that they do limit their production limit according to the market size.

### Production level

Table 1- Records of productions

Year	Beekeepers	Traditional hives TH	Topbar hives TBH	Colonized TH	Colonized TBH	Output per tone
1997	70000	876000	16105	757000	11871	3075
1999	70162	876279	16105	757262	11871	4213

The record above does not cover the whole country.

The estimate of traditional hives and beekeepers may be high, many beekeepers do not like to be included in national survey.

Uganda has a population of 22 million people, 90% of the work force are employed in agriculture related field.

Beekeeping is also feasible for people without their land but with access to forest to generate food and income.

Uganda export promotion board has assumed the production level at range of 8000 – 9000, while department of entomology, assume between 1000 – 2000, but insist that the country has capacity to produce 100000 – 200000 metric tones per year, and Uganda honey bee keeper association estimate the figure 4000 – 6000 metric tone per year.

UHBA figure was believed to be the right figure.

### Honey Quality

The quality of honey depends much on the technique and equipment used when harvesting. Most of the honey seen in the market are full of debris or broken honeycomb. This is because the hives are of fixed comb, does not allow unnecessary inspection, only when harvesting. Ugandan honey by nature is one of the best qualities liked by many in the world. The flavor takes the smells of the flowers available in the areas thus its flavor varies. It has varying color too; light brown (amber) of acacia occurs in east and north east, black amber, banana/acacia occurs in western, and most part of Uganda,

black and dark (golden) of eucalyptus aloe flower water white honey and mango occurs in north and west Nile Province



### Harvesting

Beekeeping in Uganda are practiced with varying skills. Most of the technique and tools used are that of traditions, most of the hives are hinge up on trees. When harvesting; the beekeeper will climb on the tree and remove nearly whole of the honeycomb. Some beekeepers do lower the hive to the ground then remove the comb honey from it. Few who have ideas about modern technique do wear on bee suit to avoid being sting by bees in most cases beekeepers use grass touch to attack the bee and remove the honey comb. Except those with idea of modern tool uses smokers.

Little skill on harvesting will help to improve the quality of honey produces. It is possible to harvest first grade honey from traditional hive, if the beekeepers' tools and the technique of doing their activities can be entirely sustainable if bees are not harmed.

### Processing and packaging

Processing is usual being done at home by beekeeper or housewife. Traditional methods are the many available tool and skills.

Honeycomb are broken into small pieces, heated on fire so that honey can melt out of the combs, thereafter it will be shivered by Lenin cloth bag. At other skill, comb honey may be break done in suspense, hot water will be added to felt the honey from wax then shifted. In modified skills a linen cloth is tired around the bucket, pieces of comb honeys is poured on and left to drip by itself. This method has prove to be the best to be adopted for use in rural areas where modern tools and skills are insufficient

The refined liquid honey is usual pack in Jerrycan and empty bottles of soft drink, few which can afford to buy honey jars. Comb honey are pack in buckets.

## HONEY MARKET

A market for honey is available in Uganda, but information about it is not available or hard to find. Arua Park is the many honey trading place in Kampala city. Traders traveling with honey from different part of country many people from Arua municipal. They can take tree to one week selling their honey. Some of this honey is coming from Sudan and D.R.C.

Some buyers are coming from neighboring countries mostly from Rwanda and Kenya.

Some beekeepers and traders travel to sell their honey in Nairobi, they do complain of delays and cheap price of by buyers in Kampala.

The prices depend on the sellers and buyers. Beekeepers complain of being cheated by buyers.

### Prices for honey

Table 2.

Comb honey	Kampala liter	per	Kampala PER KG, USHS	Other town per Liter, USHS	Rural areas per liter, USHS
Comb honey			800 – 2000	1000 - 1200	1000 - 2000
Crude honey	2500 – 3000			1000 – 1500	500 – 1000
Liquid honey	3000 – 5000			2500 – 3000	1500 - 3000

The above figure of price has been collect from few beekeepers and trader.

### Flow of honey market

**Village** - Beekeeper or honey hunter – harvesting from own hives then sell in the village either to town or carry to Kampala city

**Town** - Trader - buys from producer and carry to Kampala or Nairobi.

**Kampala** - Dealer - wait for trader to bring to his/her premise, refined, pack and sell to retailers

## CONCLUSION

Government of Uganda is trying hard to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. In it's efforts, plan for modernization of agriculture as proposed to alleviate poverty among the rural people. Apicultural sector is under this initiative.

Uganda forest has all the resource needed for apiculture industry. Trainings and provision of feasible tools to the farmers and facilitation of market and transport would greatly help improve this industry. Bees do not compete for food with other animals. keeping bees can be a sustainable means of income even to those who have no land but with access to forest.

Apiculture has many valuable contributions in development of agricultural activities, the most important, is pollination of crops, which cannot be, quantify. Honey contributes greatly in the support of rural people and at the national and international level, it proved diet, and means of getting cash to rural people who are farming, it also prove as medicine used by rural people against certain diseases.

Government of Uganda has open their doors for interested investors to invest in the country, since then many are trying to invest in different sectors of development few or non-has invested or taken interest to invest in apiculture sector. Thus the industry is facing lack of support to improve its activity.

Therefore to improve this industry, beekeepers, government, donor organizations and investors have to be involve and take joint venture in promoting apiculture as a worthy industry for the country.

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