

Honey quality improvement project with the COOAPIS cooperative (Cordoba-Argentina)

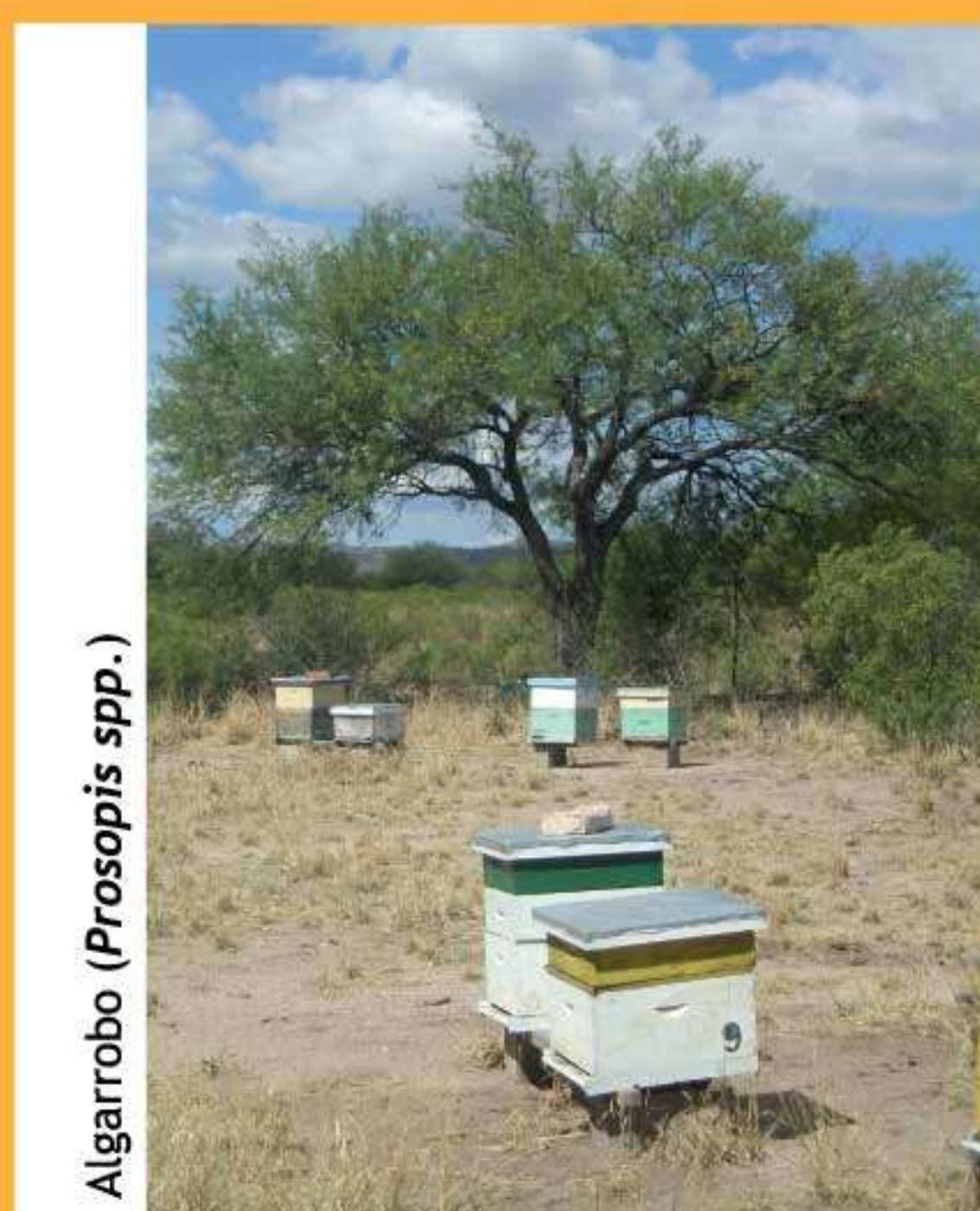


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Algarrobo (*Prosopis spp.*)

Honey production is an important source of income, particularly for families living in poor and economically marginalized regions suffering from high rates of poverty. There are no, or very few, other opportunities for income generation. Against this background, and with funding provided by the Italian Cooperation Department, UNIDO implemented a development project to upgrade beekeeping in Dean Funes, in Cordoba province in Argentina. The project concluded successfully at the end of 2008. Several stakeholders were involved: Dean Funes Municipality, INTA (Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria),

Ministerio de la Producción y Trabajo, Government of Cordoba, VITA-Europe, local beekeepers and members of COOAPIS. In addition to procurement of machines and equipment for honey extraction, emphasis was placed on production and quality improvement. Special field equipment was purchased (queen excluders, bee hives with nets and drawers to control mites, frames to control queens' activity, pollen traps, blower) and two important beekeeping experiments were carried out (Algarrobo unifloral honey; organic control and integrated pest management against Varroa).

In order to increase diffusion of the results, two magazines on beekeeping,

one video and a technical day were organized. Throughout the project, the focus was on providing technical assistance on-site and in the extraction area so as to transfer know-how in good beekeeping practices. This project demonstrates the degree of commitment in a sector which has traditionally been considered marginal but which, in reality, merits serious consideration as a valid option in efforts to improve the standard of living of marginalized communities and in designing development aid programmes.