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# Microfinancing social businesses in apiculture for sustainability in rural communities (SBEEES)

2024-2-CY01-KA210-VET-000291089

**Module 2:** The Economic and Legal Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development

**Lecturer:** Assoc. Prof. Ondrej Benus

# Content

## PART 1- The Economic Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development

- I. Introduction to Beekeeping
- II. Beekeeping as a Rural Entrepreneurship and Socio-economic Driver
- III. Economic Contribution of Beekeeping
- IV. Marketing of Bee Products
- V. Beekeeping in National and Regional Food Systems
- VI. Regional and International Case Studies
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# Content

## PART 2- The Legal Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development

I. How to start beekeeping activity?

II. Registration

III. Direct Sale from the Farm

IV. Beekeeping as a Business

V. Pathways in Beekeeping

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## **Module 2: The Economic and Legal Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development**

### **Aim**

The aim of this module is to provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of the economic, social, and legal dimensions of beekeeping within rural development. The module introduces the role of apiculture as an entrepreneurial activity, its contribution to rural livelihoods, food systems, and national economies, and the policy frameworks that support the sector. Learners will gain the ability to analyse beekeeping from both an economic and regulatory perspective, evaluate real-world case studies, and apply knowledge to support sustainable and inclusive rural development through apiculture.

# Module 2: The Economic and Legal Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development

## Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, participants will be able to:

- 1. Explain the foundations of beekeeping** and its significance for rural livelihoods, environmental sustainability, and socio-economic development.
- 2. Assess the direct and indirect economic contributions** of apiculture, including bee product markets, pollination services, and value-chain opportunities in rural communities.
- 3. Analyse marketing challenges and opportunities** for bee products and identify strategies for improving product value, traceability, and market access.
- 4. Evaluate the integration of beekeeping into local, regional, and national food systems**, including its role in food security, branding, and regional identity.
- 5. Interpret and compare policy and institutional support mechanisms** that shape apiculture at national and international levels, with a focus on EU frameworks and country-specific models.
- 6. Critically examine international case studies** to identify key success factors, development barriers, and lessons for designing effective rural beekeeping initiatives.
- 7. Apply economic and legal insights** to propose recommendations for strengthening beekeeping enterprises, cooperatives, and rural development policies.

# **PART 1- The Economic Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development**

# Chapter I.:

# Introduction to Beekeeping



# What Is Beekeeping?

- Beekeeping = the practice of managing bee colonies to collect honey and other products or to provide pollination services.
- Managed bee species include:
  - **Apis mellifera** – European honey bee (most widely used globally)
  - **Apis cerana** – common in Asia
  - **Stingless bees** – increasingly used for propolis and medicinal honey
- Beekeeping practices vary by geography, tradition, and economic purpose.

# A Tradition with Deep Roots

**Croatia:** beekeeping laws recorded as early as 1288 (Vinodolski Code); beekeepers' cooperatives founded in 1875.

**Indonesia:** traditional forest honey hunting and stingless bee use; beekeeping closely tied to indigenous knowledge and community practices.

**Slovakia & Central Europe:** long-standing use of Carniolan bees (*Apis mellifera carnica*); beekeeping has both economic and ecological significance.

# Why Beekeeping Matters (beyond honey!)?



Pollination



Income



Biodiversity



Culture

## Ecosystem Services:

- Pollination: supports fruit, vegetable, and seed production.

## Rural Livelihoods:

- Accessible business for smallholders, women, youth, elderly.

## Environmental Benefits:

- Encourages biodiversity conservation (e.g., "honey forests" in Turkey).

## Cultural Value:

- A symbol of sustainability, patience, and cooperation in rural communities.

## Stationary Beekeeping



## Migratory Beekeeping



**Stationary Beekeeping:** hives remain in one location year-round (e.g., backyard, orchard, forest edge).

**Migratory Beekeeping:** hives are moved to follow floral blooms or pollination contracts (e.g., sunflower in Croatia, eucalyptus in Turkey).

**Hive Types:** Langstroth, Top-bar, Traditional log hives, Stingless bee boxes.

### Examples:

*Croatia:* both fixed and migratory systems used; mobile hives mounted on trailers or truck beds.

*Uganda & Indonesia:* mix of modern and traditional hives based on resource availability.

# Types of beekeeping systems

# **Chapter II. :**

## **Beekeeping as a Rural Entrepreneurship and Socio-economic driver**



# Beekeeping as a Business Opportunity

- Low startup costs, minimal land requirement.
- Fast return on investment compared to other agricultural activities.
- Products include honey, wax, pollen, royal jelly, and propolis.
- Compatible with crop farming and orchard systems.





# Beekeeping in Rural Livelihoods

Suitable for:

- Part-time farmers
- Retired and elderly people
- Women and youth

Brings cash income to remote households with few other options.

No competition for land with food crops.

- **Case Example:** In Uganda, 85–90% of smallholders earn income from honey sales.



# Socio-Economic Inclusion

· Accessible to women, elderly, youth, and people with disabilities.

· Builds skills in natural resource management, small business, and cooperation.

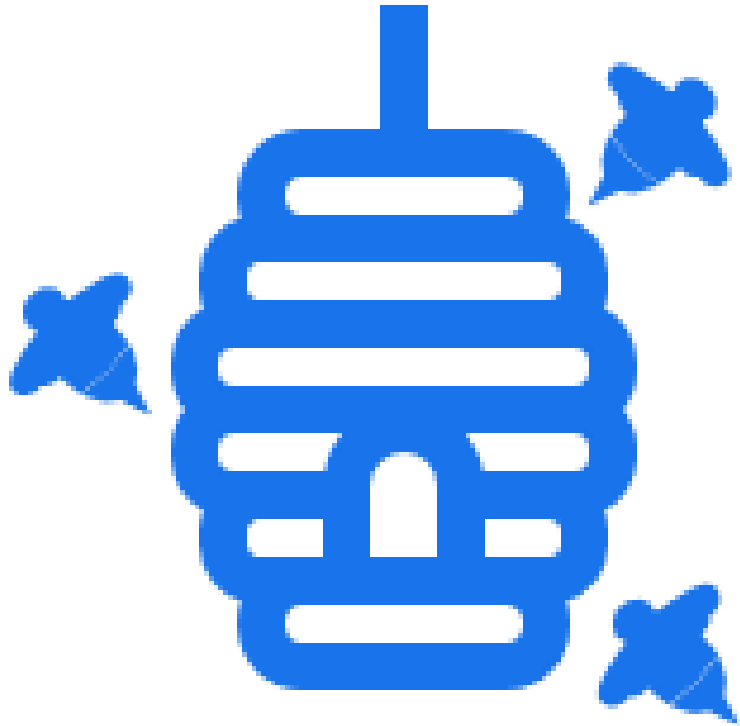
· Cultural barriers exist (e.g., in Uganda women may not climb trees), but training and hive design can help.



## Environmental and Rural Development Benefits

- Encourages reforestation and biodiversity conservation (e.g., honey forests in Turkey).
- Supports eco-tourism and sustainable branding (e.g., lavender honey, forest honey).
- Builds resilient ecosystems and local pride.

# Community Impact & Cooperatives

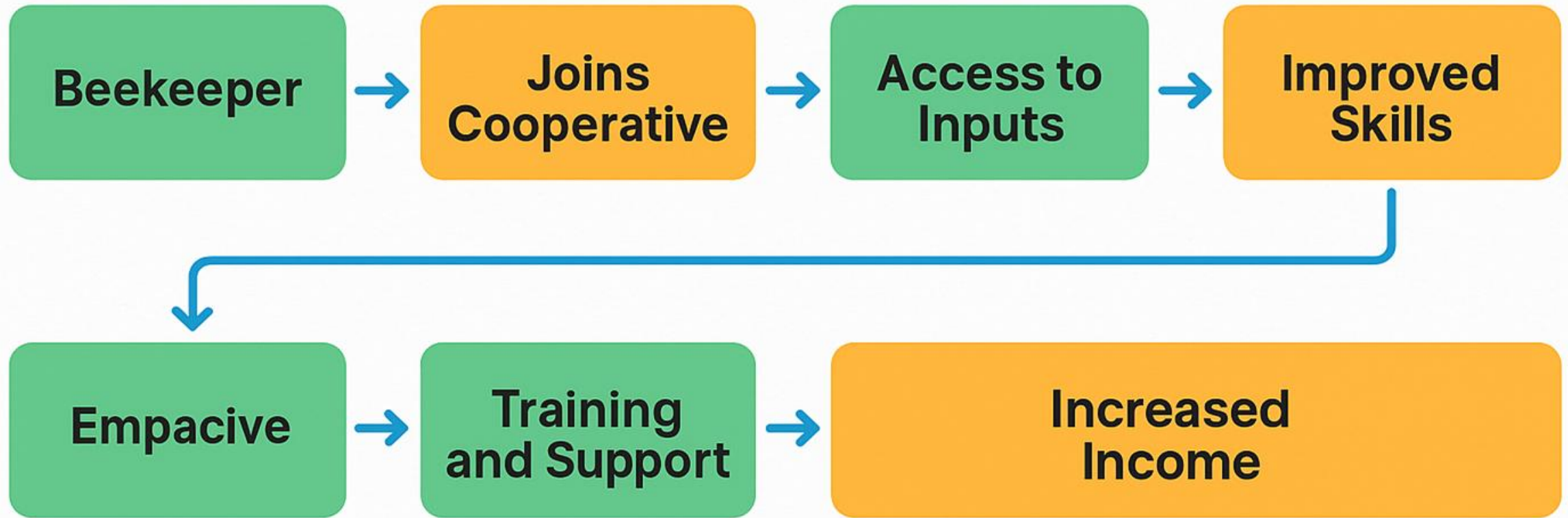


Beekeepers' associations:

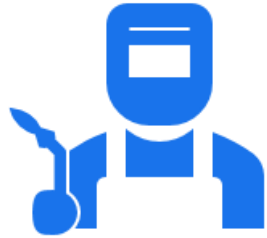
- Facilitate training
- Support marketing and bulk sales
- Ensure product standards

Strong example: Ethiopia – from honey importer to exporter thanks to cooperative model.

# How a Cooperative Helps the Beekeeper



# Common Challenges for New Beekeepers



Lack of protective equipment and knowledge.



Limited access to credit and extension services.



Fear of bees, especially where allergy risk is unknown.

<b>Constraint</b>	<b>Possible Solutions</b>
Climate Change and Pests (e.g., Varroa)	Resilient bee breeds; improved pest management
Market Volatility	Direct selling; product diversification; value addition
Intermediary Dependence	Cooperative-based marketing; shortening value chain
Lack of Training or Extension Services	Government and NGO-led capacity building programs
Unsuitable Equipment or Technology	Participatory design; locally adaptable innovations

# Chapter III.:

## Economic Contribution of Beekeeping



## Direct Economic Value – Bee Products

- Main products: honey, wax, pollen, royal jelly, propolis.
- These products are sold raw or processed in food, cosmetics, medicine.
- Example (Croatia): 152,000 hives, ~20 kg honey per hive/year.
- Example (Indonesia): traditional and modern systems coexist, including stingless bee honey.





## Indirect Economic Value – Pollination

- Pollination boosts yields and quality in fruits, vegetables, and oilseeds.
- Contributes more economic value than honey in many regions.
- Pollination supports food security and biodiversity.
- Example (Turkey): migratory hives used in crop pollination – part of a \$5–6 billion sector.



# Beekeeping's Role in the National Economy

- Strategic value despite low GDP share.
- Supports smallholders, diversifies income, and strengthens ecosystems.
- Used in rural development strategies (Croatia, Ethiopia, Turkey).
- Example: Ethiopia—transformed into a honey exporter through cooperative support.

# The Multiplier Effect of Beekeeping



Beekeeping stimulates value chains: packaging, cosmetics, and herbal products.



Promotes ecotourism and regional branding (e.g., honey trails, festivals).



Provides training and employment in rural areas.



Beekeeping is a low-risk, sustainable driver of rural economic development.

# Chapter IV.:

# Marketing of Bee Products



# Overview of Bee Product Markets



- Primary products:
  - **Honey** – raw, creamed, infused.
  - **Beeswax** – candles, cosmetics, polishes.
  - **Pollen** – dietary supplement.
  - **Propolis & royal jelly** – medicinal/nutritional.
- Marketed locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Increasing demand for **natural and traceable products**.

# Market Channels and Pricing Strategies

## Content:

- **Direct sales:** at home, local markets, fairs.
- **Cooperatives and associations:** collective branding, packaging, quality assurance.
- **Online platforms:** increasingly used in urban areas.
- **Export channels:** niche, premium, organic segments.

## Price Influencers:

- Product type and purity.
- Brand reputation and story.
- Packaging and certification (e.g., organic, PDO/PGI).

**Example:** Ethiopia – cooperative-branded honey sold for 2x the price of informal honey.

# Challenges in Marketing Bee Products

## Content:

- Lack of access to:
  - Bottling equipment and hygienic facilities.
  - Attractive packaging and labeling.
  - Cold chain and storage.
- Limited **marketing skills** and branding knowledge.
- Poor traceability, fake honey concerns.
- **Legal barriers:** food safety registration, labeling laws.

**Example:** Croatia – many beekeepers do not sell formally due to legal complexity.

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
<b>Limited market access</b>	<b>Investment in market linkages</b>
<b>Traceability shortcomings</b>	<b>Training in record keeping, packaging</b>
<b>Price undercutting by middlemen</b>	<b>Organizational strengthening</b>
<b>Lack of product diversification</b>	<b>Support for new products (pollen, royal jelly, etc.)</b>

# Strategies for Success in Bee Product Marketing



## How to Improve Sales and Visibility?

### Solution:

- Join or form **producer cooperatives** for scale and branding.
- Invest in basic **labeling and packaging** skills.
- Use local identity: **“Forest honey,” “Meadow honey,” “Carpathian honey.”**
- Develop online presence via **social media and e-commerce**.
- Explore niche markets: health-conscious consumers, eco-tourists.
- **Example:** Uganda – value addition (e.g., flavored honey) used in youth projects.

# **Chapter V.:** **Beekeeping in National and Regional Food Systems**



# The Role of Pollination in Food Systems

Over 75% of leading global food crops depend on pollinators.

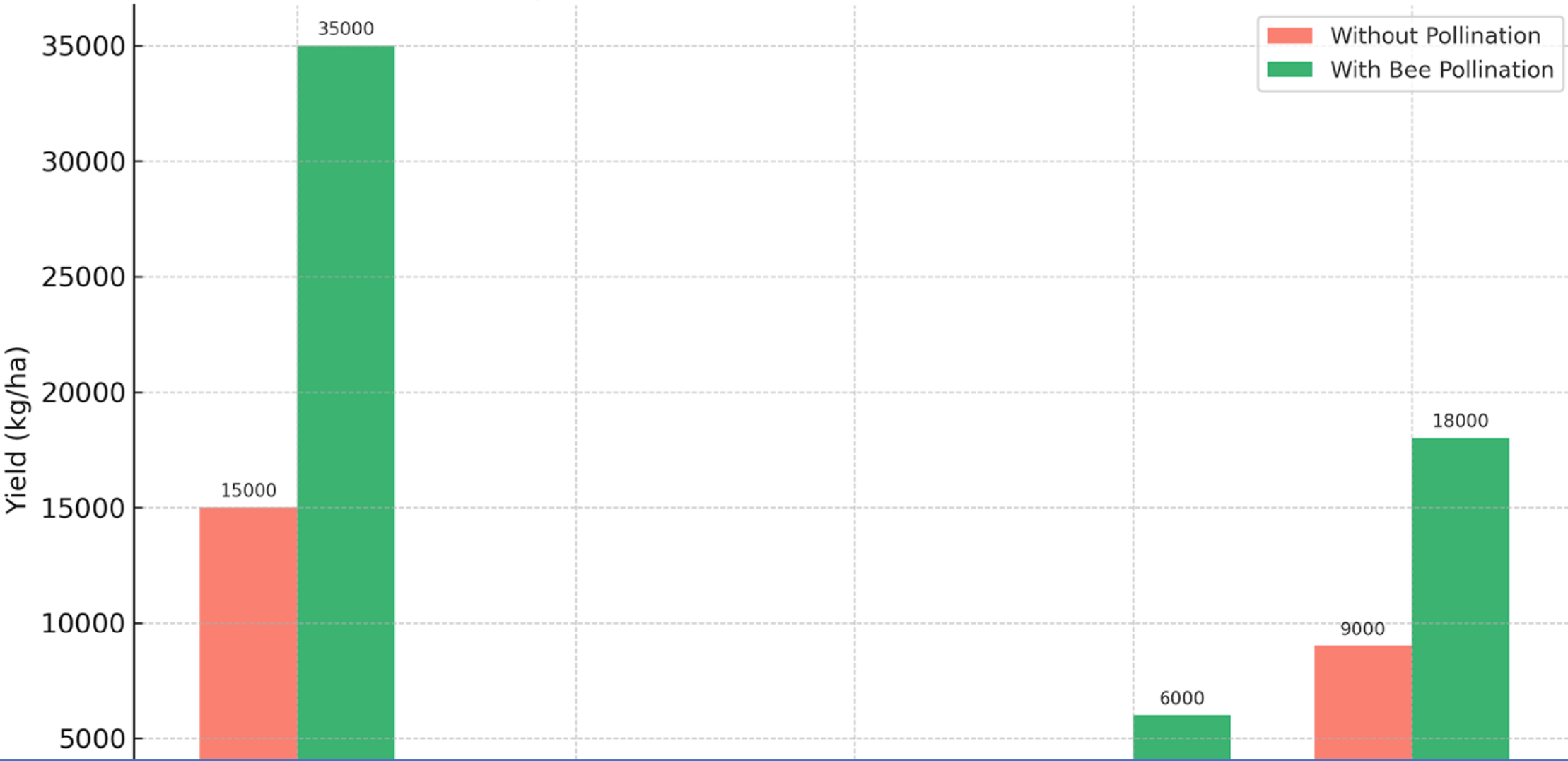
Pollination improves **fruit set, yield, and crop quality**.

Pollinator-dependent crops: apples, pears, cherries, melons, nuts, oilseed rape, and many vegetables.

Managed bees **supplement or replace** wild pollination in intensively farmed areas.

**Example:** EU countries increasingly recognize the value of bee services in fruit and oilseed sectors.

# Crop Yield With vs. Without Bee Pollination



# Beekeeping as Part of Local Food Security

- Honey is both a **nutritious food** and a **preservable sweetener**.
- Local honey contributes to **food self-reliance**, especially in rural or mountainous areas.
- Bees enhance local food systems by:
  - Boosting home garden productivity.
  - Supporting pollination in small-scale orchards.
- Stingless bees and wild bee management expand food system resilience (e.g., Indonesia).
- **Example:** In Uganda and Ethiopia, honey is consumed locally and used as a **food reserve** during crop shortages.



# Integration into Regional Food Branding and Identity

- Local honey often reflects **unique flora**: chestnut, acacia, linden, heather, pine, or wildflowers.
- Honey is used in **PDO/PGI** schemes in the EU (Protected Designation of Origin / Protected Geographical Indication).
- Adds **value to rural tourism** and supports regional branding.
- **Example:** Croatia promotes acacia honey and migratory beekeeping in Slavonia and Baranja.



# Beekeeping in Agricultural Policy and Sustainability

- Recognized in **EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** for agrobiodiversity, landscape management, and pollination.
- Eligible for support under **rural development measures**, especially agri-environmental schemes.
- Beekeeping aligns with:
  - Biodiversity strategies (EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030),
  - Climate adaptation goals,
  - Organic and low-input farming models.
- **Example:** Turkey's "honey forests" and support for migratory beekeeping link policy with environmental services.

# **Chapter VI.:**

# **Regional and International Case Studies**



# Croatia – Tradition, Challenges, and Market Development

Beekeeping since 13th century (Vinodolski Code, 1288).

152,432 hives in 2016, mostly run by part-time beekeepers.

Strong culture of migratory beekeeping (e.g., moving to sunflower or acacia regions).

Main sales via **direct marketing**; only ~30% of honey enters formal markets.

## Challenges:

- Complex registration and hygiene rules,
- High production costs,
- Limited domestic consumption (under 1 kg per capita/year).



# Turkey – Honey Forests and State Support

- ~40,000 professional beekeepers and over 8 million hives.
- State-backed projects like ORKÖY support forest villagers with hives and training.
- “**Honey forests**” introduced to improve nectar sources and support rural income.
- Beekeeping integrated into forest conservation strategies.
- Honey and pollination combined contribute ~\$5–6 billion to economy.
- Migratory systems used to follow bloom cycles and regional markets.





# Uganda and Ethiopia – Beekeeping for Rural Livelihoods

## Uganda:

- Honey is key income for smallholders (85–90% use it for cash).
- Inclusion of elderly, women, and disabled is improving.
- Barriers: hive access, training, credit, market organization.

## Ethiopia:

- Strategic investment in cooperatives transformed it into a **honey-exporting country**.
- Co-ops improve quality, packaging, and traceability.
- State and donor-supported development programs created market linkages.

# Indonesia – Diversity and New Generations

- High bee diversity: *Apis mellifera*, stingless bees (*Trigona spp.*), *Apis cerana*.
- Shift from traditional forest honey hunting to small-scale apiary management.
- Stingless bees preferred in tropical, urban, and allergy-sensitive areas.
- Growth of youth involvement: many beekeepers now aged 30–39.
- Key barriers: climate variability, pesticide use, market competition.

# Chapter VII.:

## Policy and Institutional Support



# Why Policy Support Matters for Beekeeping

Flowchart: How Support Translates to Rural Stability



Beekeeping is low-cost but still needs:

- Extension services
- Training and knowledge transfer
- Market access and hygiene certification

Vulnerable to:

- Pests and diseases (e.g. Varroa, foulbrood)
- Pesticides and habitat loss

Institutional support improves:

- Product quality and food safety
- Professionalization and scaling
- Participation by women, youth, and elderly



# EU Beekeeping in the EU Policy Framework

## EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):

- Direct subsidies (per hive in some countries)
- Rural development funding (RDP/LEADER)

## National support examples:

- **Croatia:** Queen breeding support, migratory transport incentives, education subsidies
- **Slovakia:** Support for beekeeper associations and disease prevention

## Eligible activities:

- Hive and tool purchases
- Queen breeding and selection
- Laboratory testing, training, market access improvements

# Effective National Models Case Study – Turkey and Ethiopia

- **Turkey:**
  - ORKÖY program (Forest Service): funding for hives, training, gear
  - Honey forests as institutional innovation for sustainable land use
- **Ethiopia:**
  - Donor and government coordination (e.g. SNV, ILRI)
  - Formation of cooperatives: packaging, branding, export certification
  - Transformation from net importer to net exporter

## Key Factors:

- Long-term planning
- Inclusive access to tools and training
- Public-private partnerships

# Lessons for Future Policy Design

## Lessons from practice:

- Community-driven projects outperform top-down models
- Bundled support (training + credit + cooperative) is most effective
- Simple registration and hygiene rules encourage formalization



## Recommendations:

- Support innovation: e-commerce, branding, women's groups
- Develop participatory extension systems
- Align with sustainability (e.g. biodiversity, climate action)

# **Chapter VIII.:**

## **Case Studies and Lessons Learned**



# Cooperative Success – Ethiopia and Croatia

## Ethiopia:

- Government and NGO support → strong cooperative movement.
- Co-ops improved honey quality, packaging, and branding.
- Helped country shift from importer to exporter.

## Croatia:

- Long history of beekeeper associations.
- Regional honey types (e.g., acacia) promoted through co-ops.
- Formal market penetration remains a challenge.

- **Key Lesson:** Collective organization boosts market access, trust, and bargaining power.

# Beekeeping for Inclusion – Uganda and Indonesia

## Uganda:

- Beekeeping accessible to women, older people, and youth.
- Flexible, non-land-based, and low physical demand.
- Constraints: cultural barriers, allergy risks, lack of extension.

## Indonesia:

- Stingless bees are beginner-friendly and safer (no stings).
  - New generation (age 30–39) engaging in small-scale beekeeping.
- **Key Lesson:** Inclusive design (equipment, training, hive type) increases adoption and equity.



# State-Led Innovation – Turkey’s Honey Forests

01

**Turkey:** “Honey forests” created by the General Directorate of Forestry.

02

Forest zones enriched with nectar plants to support bees and biodiversity.

03

ORKÖY program supports beekeeping among forest villagers.

04

Combines forestry, agriculture, and income generation.

05

**Key Lesson:** Beekeeping can be integrated into **landscape-level policy** for both ecological and economic goals.

# Lessons for Future Beekeepers and Policymakers

- ✓ Focus on training, not just equipment
- ✓ Promote market readiness (labeling, hygiene, branding)
- ✓ Strengthen local identity through honey terroir
  - ✓ Build cooperatives or local networks
- ✓ Include women and young people from the start
- ✓ Link beekeeping with biodiversity and agroforestry

**Key Lesson:** Sustainable beekeeping = local capacity + access + market + ecosystem support

# Chapter IX.:

## Conclusions and Recommendations



# What we covered in this lecture

- Beekeeping = economic, ecological, and social tool.
- Key aspects covered:
  - Product value and pollination services
  - Entrepreneurship and inclusion
  - Marketing strategies
  - Policy and institutional support
- Strong examples: Croatia, Turkey, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Uganda
- **Key Takeaway:** Beekeeping offers much more than honey—it's a bridge between **rural development, food systems, and nature conservation.**

# Recommendations for future Beekeepers

- Start small, scale gradually
- Join local associations or cooperatives
- Focus on quality: hive health, hygiene, and traceability
- Learn the basics of:
  - Pollination ecology
  - Product processing
  - Direct sales and digital marketing
- Explore niche markets (e.g., forest honey, herbal honey)
- **Visual Suggestion:** Checklist or roadmap graphic: hobby → entrepreneur → professional.



# Essential approach from Policymakers and Rural Development Actors in order to preserve beekeeping

## Support:

- Participatory training systems
- Women/youth-targeted programs
- Tools + training + markets (not just subsidies)

Simplify regulations for small producers

Recognize pollination as a strategic service

## Use beekeeping in:

- Rural development strategies
- Biodiversity and climate policies
- Eco-tourism planning

**Example:** Integrate honey trails and festivals into local development plans.

# Role of Researchers and Educators



- . Develop interdisciplinary programs on:
  - Bee biology + marketing + policy
- . Study:
  - Economic value of pollination in Slovakia
  - Beekeeping's climate resilience
- . Offer extension material for beekeepers:
  - In local languages
  - Tailored to age, gender, and location
- . Encourage citizen science (bee monitoring, biodiversity mapping)

# Final thought

## – Why Beekeeping Matters?



Beekeeping offers a rare combination of benefits:

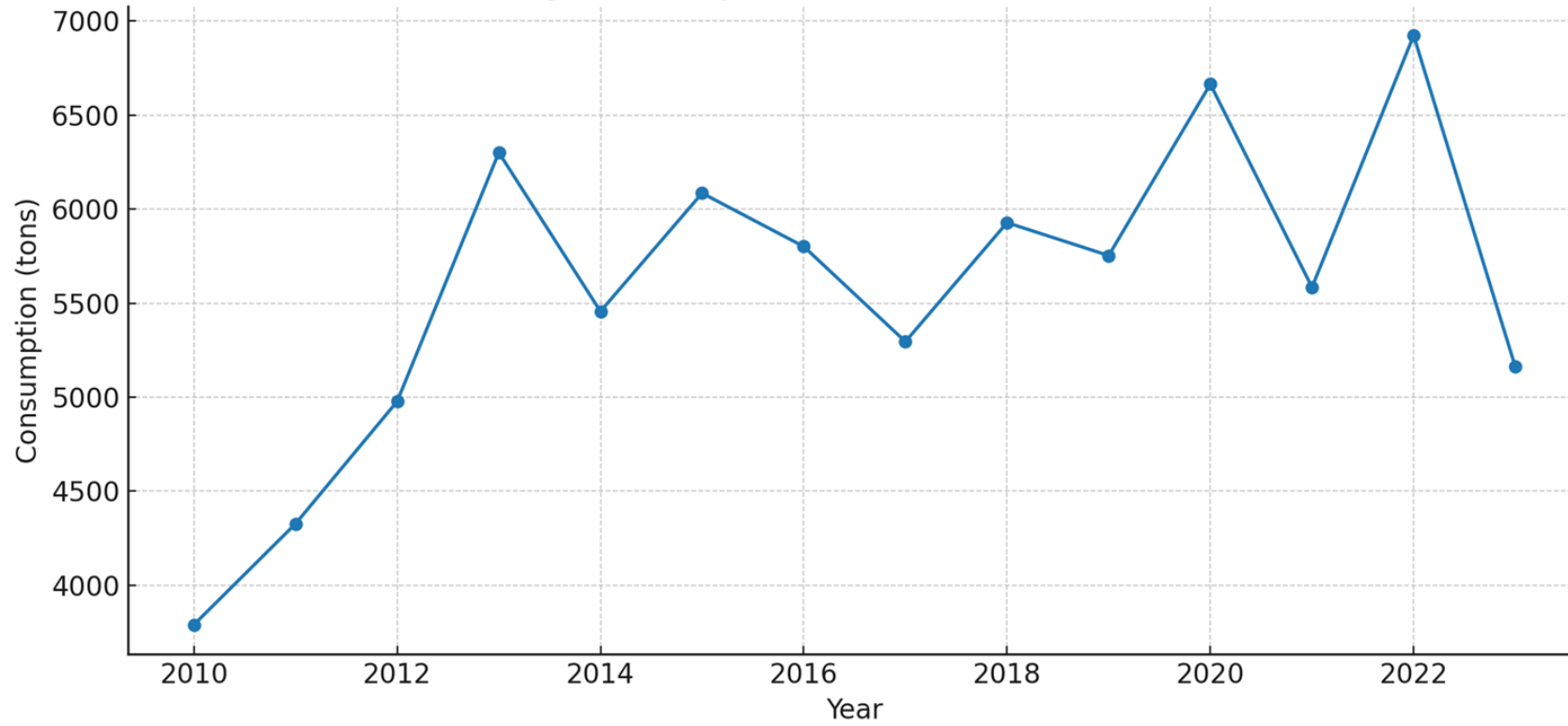
- ✓ Food production
- ✓ Income generation
- ✓ Biodiversity protection
- ✓ Rural innovation



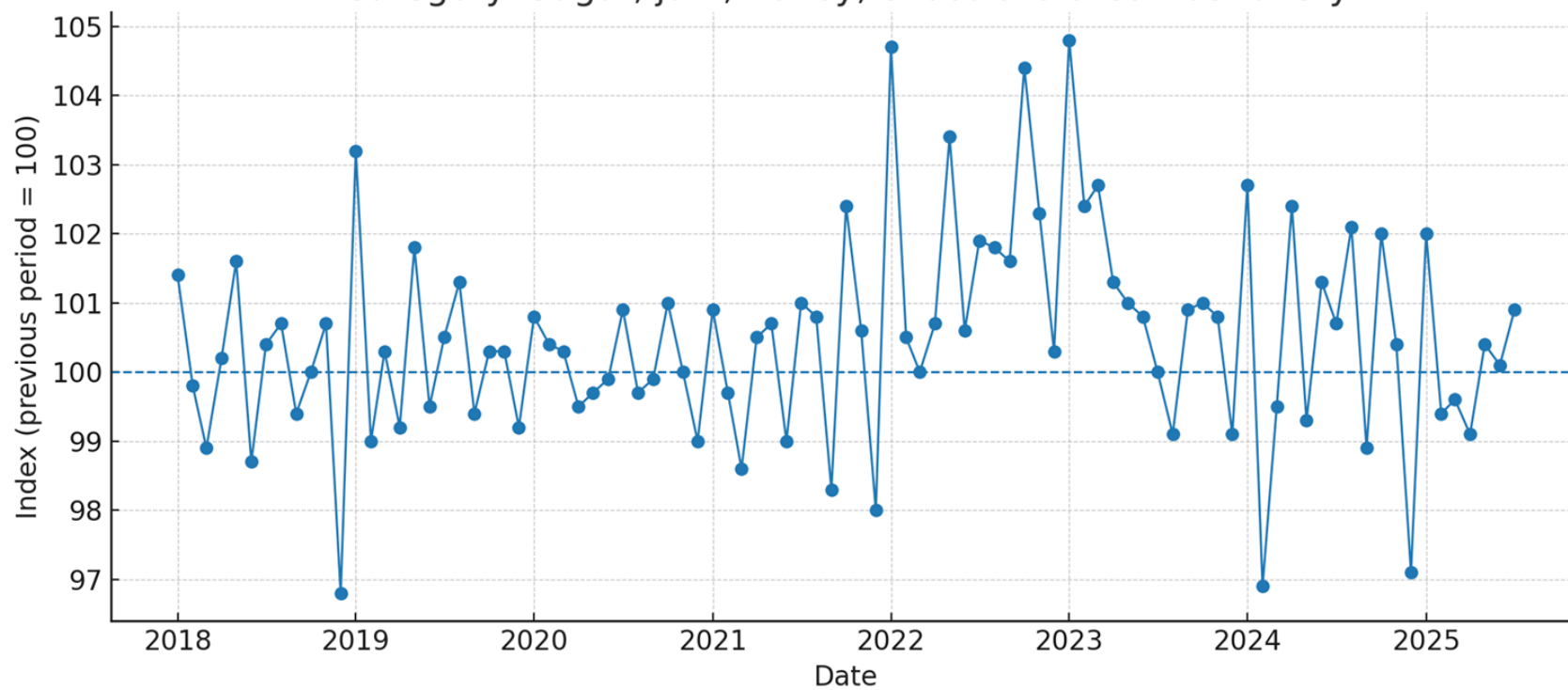
Whether you're a farmer, policymaker, teacher, or entrepreneur—beekeeping deserves your attention.

## **PART 2- The Legal Landscape of Apiculture in Rural Development**

Honey consumption in Slovakia (2010-2023)



Price change index (prev. period = 100)  
Category: Sugar, jam, honey, chocolate & confectionery



# Chapter I: How to start beekeeping activity?



Begin with the basics: books, articles, videos, fairs, conferences, beekeeping web/Facebook pages.

Easiest entry: ask a beekeeper at a local market or fair.

Methods vary: there's no single manual; gather as much information as you can.

Beekeepers Associations usually offers education: magazines, exhibitions, honey tastings, lectures, seminars, courses.



CONNECT WITH EXPERIENCED  
BEEKEEPERS IN YOUR AREA.



SZV HAS 143 LOCAL  
ORGANIZATIONS (ZO); REGISTER  
AND BECOME A MEMBER.



THROUGH YOUR ZO YOU'LL GET  
UPDATES ON LEGISLATION,  
EDUCATION, BEE BREEDING,  
FUNDING, EXHIBITIONS,  
CONFERENCES, AND  
COMPETITIONS.



CONTACTS FOR ZO SZV:  
[VCELARI.SK/SLOVENSKY-ZVAZ-  
VCELAROV/KONTAKTY-NA-ZO-SZV/](http://VCELARI.SK/SLOVENSKY-ZVAZ-VCELAROV/KONTAKTY-NA-ZO-SZV/)

# First contact with bees & ways to learn

Get hands-on at the hives with an experienced beekeeper — real, practical exposure helps you understand whether beekeeping is truly the right fit for you. After all, *“being a beekeeper isn’t just enjoying honey; it’s real work with living creatures.”*

## **Learning paths:**

- **Introductory beekeeping courses:**

Many countries offer beginner-level accredited training through agricultural schools, beekeeper associations, or rural development programs. Participants often receive a certificate recognized by national beekeeper organizations or agricultural authorities.

- **Formal vocational or technical education:**

Various agricultural and vocational schools worldwide include apiculture as a dedicated study track or as part of broader farming programs.

# Chapter II: Registration



# Legal framework in Slovakia

Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR No. 285/2017 Coll. on the identification and registration of bee colonies

Act No. 39/2007 Coll. on Veterinary Care (§ 40a – holding registration)

Authorities: Regional Veterinary and Food Administration (RVPS),  
Central Register of Farm Animals (CEHZ)

Outcome: registration number of the holding / owner of bee colonies



OWNER OF BEE COLONIES: NATURAL PERSON,  
SOLE TRADER, OR LEGAL ENTITY WITH AT LEAST  
ONE COLONY



APIARY SITE: LOCATION DURING NECTAR FLOW OR  
OVERWINTERING (GPS, PARCEL, CADASTRE)



THE CENTRAL REGISTER CONTAINS: OWNER'S  
REGISTRATION NUMBER, NUMBER OF COLONIES,  
TYPE OF KEEPING, DATA ON SITES AND  
MIGRATORY BEEKEEPING

1) Apply to the locally competent RVPS to register the holding of farm animals (§ 40a)

2) RVPS verifies conditions and confirms the registration form

3) Fill in the “Notification of Keeping Bee Colonies” according to Decree 285/2017 Coll.

4) Within 7 days: notify the start of keeping to RVPS; then within 7 days report to CEHZ (send the confirmed forms)

5) CEHZ assigns the registration number of the holding/owner

Annual site report: by 5 September after colony inspection (Annex No. 2)

Reporting changes: within 7 days of any change (Annex No. 3)

Migratory beekeeping: report electronically — plan by 1 Feb; at the latest by 1 Mar; arrivals/departures within 2 days

Marking the apiary/site with an information board; outside built-up areas also the sign “Biological hazard — BEES” (Annex No. 5)

# Termination of keeping / extinction of a site



Within 7 days notify RVPS of termination of keeping or extinction of a site



Within 7 days after notifying RVPS, report termination to CEHZ on the “Notification of Keeping Bee Colonies” form (state the reason for extinction)



If migratory beekeeping does not end by returning to the original site: report the new site under § 3(1)

# Where to get forms and contacts



Application for holding registration of farm animals: RVPS / CEHZ



“Notification of Keeping Bee Colonies”, “Annual report”, “Change report” — templates in the decree annexes; also available via the Slovak Beekeepers Association (SZV)

# Common mistakes & checklist

Missed 7-day deadlines (start/termination, changes)

Unreported migratory plan / late arrival–departure entries

Incomplete data: GPS, parcel, cadastre, type of keeping

Unmarked site with mandatory board/sign

CHECKLIST: RVPS → CEHZ → registration number;  
Annual report by 5 Sept; Changes within 7 days;  
Marking; Migratory beekeeping

# Chapter III:

## Direct Sale from the Farm



# Legislative Framework (Slovak Republic)

**Act No. 39/2007 Coll. on Veterinary Care:** sets veterinary requirements for products of animal origin, rights and obligations of operators, sanctions, and the organization of state authorities (Ministry, State Veterinary and Food Administration—ŠVPS SR, and Regional Veterinary and Food Administrations—RVPS) and their inspections.

**Government Decree No. 360/2011 Coll.:** lays down hygiene requirements for direct sale and supply of small quantities of primary products (including honey) to the final consumer or to a local retail establishment.

Small quantity of honey — direct sale: honey from the beekeeper's own production sold at the beekeeper's premises or at a local market, in amounts corresponding to the usual household consumption of the final consumer.

Supplies to a local retail establishment: together up to 1 tonne/year (only honey from the beekeeper's own production); the establishment must directly supply the final consumer.

Local retail establishment: an appropriately equipped shop/market stall/catering facility (excluding supermarkets, etc.); for products of animal origin (including honey) it must be located within a 2-hour drive from the RVPS that registered the beekeeper.

No further distribution: honey sold or supplied in these small quantities cannot be further placed on the market; local retail establishments must not pass these small quantities on to other establishments.

# Registration of the Beekeeper (Primary Producer)

Registration duty: the food business operator (primary producer) applies to the competent RVPS to register each establishment (under § 40). The application includes identification details and the person responsible for hygiene of operations.

Application form: “Application for registration of a primary producer’s establishment...” under § 40 of Act 39/2007 and Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004; submitted electronically via the national portal or in person/by post to the competent RVPS.



Deadline: submit 28 days before starting the activity; afterwards, notify changes on an ongoing basis (including suspension/termination).



Scope of activities in the form: tick “Direct supply (sale) of small quantities of HONEY...” and “production, extraction and packaging of honey on the premises of the holder of bee colonies”; indicate points of sale (on-farm, market, local retail establishments).

Protection against contamination, use of food-grade equipment/containers; do not expose honey to direct sunlight.

Labelling for direct sale (at the beekeeper's premises/market) must ensure traceability and include:

– name and address of the primary producer (or business name/registered office),

– address of the registered establishment or of the holder of bee colonies,

– country of origin of the honey,

– date of packing.

# Hygiene & Labelling Requirements for Honey

## Beekeeper's records:

- 1. total number of colonies,*
  - 2. quantity of honey produced,*
  - 3. annual totals sold directly (on-farm/market),*
  - 4. supplied honey to local retail establishments (with names/addresses of buyers)*
- Keep for at least 1 year.
  - Records of the retail establishment: maintain documents with the labelling data to ensure traceability of honey.



ŠVPS SR and RVPS carry out official controls of compliance with veterinary and food requirements for products of animal origin at all stages of production and distribution.



Purpose: the legal framework protects animal and human health, sets operator obligations, and defines sanctions.



Practical: if unsure about the application, contact your competent RVPS for guidance; honey sold to the final consumer must not be resold.

# Chapter IV: Beekeeping as a Business



- Commercial Code (Act No. 513/1991 Coll.) — sets company forms, rules for entrepreneurs and registration in the Commercial Register.
- Trade Licensing Act (Act No. 455/1991 Coll.) — governs “trades” (živnosti), registration by notification, duties, suspension/termination.
- Recommended list of free trades (Apr 2025 update) — clarifies content of common free trades, incl. food production (processing natural honey, beeswax) and beverage production (mead up to 15% vol.).



A TRADE IS CONTINUOUS ACTIVITY  
CARRIED OUT INDEPENDENTLY, IN  
ONE'S OWN NAME AND  
RESPONSIBILITY, FOR PROFIT AND  
UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE ACT.



NOT A TRADE: ACTIVITIES EXCLUDED BY LAW,  
INCL. AGRICULTURE—ANIMAL PRODUCTION  
AND SALE OF UNPROCESSED OR PROCESSED  
PRODUCTS FROM ONE'S OWN SMALL-SCALE  
BREEDING (E.G., DIRECT SALE OF OWN  
HONEY).

# When a beekeeper needs a trade licence?

- Food production (free trade): the list expressly includes processing natural honey and beeswax.
- Beverage production (free trade): includes mead (up to 15% alcohol).
- Services for agriculture may be a free trade, but own breeding itself is not covered as a trade (note in the list).



Notify the locally competent Trade Office (by place of residence) — this is the legal act to start.



The Office issues a trade certificate within 3 working days if the notification meets legal requirements.



The trade exists on the day of a complete notification (or a later start date stated in it).



OPERATE PROPERLY, HONESTLY,  
AND PROFESSIONALLY; MARK  
THE ESTABLISHMENT NO LATER  
THAN THE FIRST DAY OF  
OPERATION; ENSURE PROOF OF  
ORIGIN OF GOODS.



NOTIFY CHANGES (E.G., DATA,  
ESTABLISHMENT) TO THE TRADE  
OFFICE; BREACHES CAN BE  
SANCTIONED.



YOU CAN SUSPEND OR  
TERMINATE THE TRADE BY  
NOTIFICATION; EFFECTS ARISE  
THE DAY AFTER DELIVERY  
(UNLESS YOU SET A LATER  
DATE).

# Business companies a beekeeper can establish (Commercial Code)



The Code governs entrepreneurs and companies as legal persons (e.g., limited liability company – s.r.o., simple joint-stock company – j.s.a.).



Ltd. : popular SME form; company can have up to 50 partners.



j.s.a. is also available under the Code (simple joint-stock company).

# Essentials for a Ltd.

- **Minimum** registered capital: €5,000 total; minimum individual contribution: €750.
- **Limited liability:** members are liable up to their unpaid contributions; the company itself is liable for its obligations.
- **Simplified electronic formation** is possible if conditions are met (cash contributions only; up to 5 members; selected free trades; notary files to the registry court).
- The Trade Act's **Appendix 4** lists free trades eligible for this simplified path (incl. food & starch production and beverage production).

# How a company registers its trades



FOR COMPANIES, TRADE AUTHORISATION IS EVIDENCED BY A CERTIFICATE OR EXTRACT FROM THE TRADE REGISTER; FOR SIMPLIFIED INCORPORATIONS, THE REGISTRY COURT HANDLES THE TRADE NOTIFICATION AFTER INCORPORATION.



FOR ENTITIES FORMED VIA THE SIMPLIFIED ROUTE, THE TRADE ARISES ON THE DAY OF COMMERCIAL REGISTER ENTRY FOR THE APPENDIX 4A TRADES.

# Picking your route (quick guide)

- Only direct sale of own honey (from your own beekeeping): not a trade under the Trade Licensing Act's exclusion.
- Processing/packaging honey or making mead ( $\leq 15\%$ ) for the market: register relevant free trades.
- Need partners or liability separation? Consider s.r.o. with limited liability and defined capital rules.

# Trade vs. Company: benefits & drawbacks

Trade (sole trader under the Trade Licensing Act)

## Benefits

- Fast start: trade arises on the day of complete notification; certificate issued within 3 working days.
- Flexibility: suspend or terminate by notification; effects start the day after delivery (or on your later stated date).
- Fit for beekeeping add-ons: clear free-trade categories for honey processing and mead ( $\leq 15\%$ ).

## Drawbacks

- Compliance rests on you: must operate properly, honestly, professionally, mark the establishment, and notify changes; sanctions apply for breaches.

# Trade vs. Company: benefits & drawbacks

Business company (e.g., Ltd. under the Commercial Code)

## Benefits

- Limited liability: members' liability limited to unpaid contributions.
- Partners & structure: up to 50 members (s.r.o.); corporate form may aid governance and continuity.
- Possible simplified formation for small, cash-only, free-trade s.r.o. via notary & electronic filing.

## Drawbacks

- Capital requirements: minimum €5,000 (company) and €750 (per member contribution).
- Eligibility & formalities: founders must meet conditions (e.g., not appear in specified registers); formation involves notarial steps and Commercial Register entry.

# Chapter V: Pathways in bekeeping



# Two Legal Paths to Sell Honey in Slovakia

Goal: place your own honey (and bee products) on the market legally.

Path A: Sale from the Farm (“predaj z dvora”) — simplified local/direct regime for small volumes.

Path B: Business route (sole trader/SHR, trade license, or company) — full food-business obligations.

Core trade-off: lower admin & local reach vs. higher admin & nationwide/online reach.

Key legal bases: Act No. 39/2007 (§40a – apiary registration); Gov. Regulation 360/2011 (sale from farm); Reg. (EC) 852/2004 (hygiene); Reg. (EU) 1169/2011 (food information).

# Before anything: Register the Apiary

## Who & where:

Every beekeeper registers the livestock holding (apiary) with the local RVPS.

## What's on the form:

applicant/holder, address/parcel, activity (beekeeping), max numbers, responsible person.

**Fees:** €33 (natural person), €100 (entrepreneur/SHR/company).

# **Before Anything: Register the Apiary**

Good practice: keep your colony count and locations up to date; note seasonal moves; retain RVPS decisions.

Why it matters: RVPS number ties into later registrations, labeling, and official checks.

# SALE FROM THE FARM (Simplified Regime)



Where you may sell: direct to consumers (home gate, yard, local market) and limited supply to nearby retail.



“Local” definition: within ~2 hours’ travel (administrative interpretation used by RVPS).



Volume/flow limits: to retail shops max 1 t/year; direct-to-consumer = for usual household consumption.



What you may NOT do: distance selling (no e-shop/mail order), and products supplied this way must not be further distributed.

# **SALE FROM THE FARM (Simplified Regime)**

## Labeling (add-ons for this regime):

- Product name (“Honey”), producer’s name & address.
- Address of the registered holding/establishment, country of origin, date of packing.
- Net quantity, best-before, batch (good practice).
- Records you must keep (simple logs): colonies, produced volumes, annual sales split by channel (consumer/market/retail), names & addresses of retail buyers.
- Registration step: notify/register “sale from the farm” at RVPS (typical fee ~€50, often 50% if e-filed).

# **BUSINESS ROUTE (Full Food- Business Setup)**

## **Legal forms:**

- SHR/sole trader (živnosť) or company (e.g., Ltd.); obtain trade license / company registration.

## **Food-business registration:**

- register your food establishment with RVPS (Reg. 852/2004, Art. 6).

## **Premises & hygiene:**

- suitable rooms/equipment; sanitation plan; water quality; waste & pest control; staff hygiene.

# **BUSINESS ROUTE (Full Food- Business Setup)**

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Own-check system (HACCP-style): hazard analysis, CCPs/PRPs, traceability (one step back/forward), complaints & withdrawals.

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Labeling (full rules under EU 1169/2011): name of food, net weight, DMT, lot/batch, name & address of FBO, origin (specific rules for honey), storage/use instructions if relevant.

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Commercial scope enabled: nationwide distribution, e-shop/mail order, wholesale, retail chains, exports.

# Taxes, eKasa & Thresholds

## If NOT a business (sale from farm by non-entrepreneur):

- Treated as occasional income; exempt up to €500/year; amounts above are taxable in your annual return.
- eKasa: not required (you're not selling on the basis of a trade license).

## If a business (SHR/živnost'/Ltd.):

- Tax office registration (income tax); proper invoicing and accounting.
- eKasa usually required for cash sales of goods.
- VAT (DPH) registration once turnover hits €50,000/year (assessed on a calendar-year basis from 2025).

**Tip: even as a small operator, keep clean sales/stock logs and retain all RVPS/ÚVZ decisions.**

# Decision Guide & Practical Checklist

Choose “Sale from the Farm” if you: sell face-to-face, in a local radius, with modest volumes; no online plans.

Choose Business route if you: want e-commerce, wholesale/retail chains, or expect to scale beyond local limits.

Step-by-step (Sale from Farm): Register apiary at RVPS → 2) File sale-from-farm notification → 3) Set labels (incl. origin/packing date) → 4) Keep simple records.

# Decision Guide & Practical Checklist

## Step-by-step (Business):

- Pick legal form (SHR/živnost'/s. r. o.-Ltd.) → 2) Register food establishment with RVPS (+ premises readiness; ÚVZ if applicable) → 3) Implement own-checks/HACCP & traceability → 4) Set full labels → 5) Tax/eKasa setup → 6) Launch online/retail channels.

# Chapter VI: Subsidies



# Beekeeper Subsidies in Slovakia (2025/2026):

## What this covers:

**Scope & basis:** Support for measures under the Strategic Plan of the CAP in the beekeeping sector, governed nationally by Government Decree No. 10/2023 and administered by the Pôdohospodárska platobná agentúra (PPA).

**Beekeeping year:** 1 Aug – 31 Jul; applications and accounting follow this cycle.

**Total envelope (2025/2026):** €1,999,946 (EU €999,973 + SR €999,973).

**Financial caps by measure (max):** advisory/technical €600,946; investments €684,000; pests/diseases €590,000; grazing conditions €20,000; restocking & breeding €15,000; analyses €10,000; applied research €30,000; promotion/marketing €50,000.

Applicant: typically a beekeeping association that (as of 31 May 2025) gathers >1% of beekeepers and >1% of colonies (including hives registered to the association).

Final recipients of support: the approved applicant; beekeeping associations/organizational units; beekeepers; beginners (meeting defined criteria); educational institutions; qualified veterinary professionals; operators of demonstration/eco/experimental apiaries; conference speakers, etc.

Advisory & technical support:  
lectures/seminars; beekeeping clubs;  
youth summer courses; accredited  
training; conferences; excursions;  
publications;  
exhibitions/competitions; IT/AV gear  
for associations; instructional tools;  
admin to deliver support.

Investments & other activities:  
equipment for  
harvesting/processing/storing bee  
products; security devices; seasonal  
monitoring; school/demo/eco apiary  
equipment; innovative technologies;  
digitization; environmental  
measures.

# What is funded

- Pests & diseases: approved veterinary medicines and their application, applicators, inspections (migratory & permanent apiaries), queen isolators, etc.
- Forage conditions: devices for seasonal movement of colonies; projects ensuring effective forage.
- Restocking/breeding: purchase of Carniolan queens (various categories), colonies and hive sets for beginners.
- Analyses, applied research, promotion/marketing: product/toxicity analyses; collaboration on applied research; publications, films, websites/apps, campaigns, “Honey Breakfasts,” etc.

# Cost eligibility, documentation & payment rules

Core principles: costs must be necessary, real, documented, incurred within the beekeeping year, and used economically/effectively for the measure. Admin costs  $\leq 4\%$  of eligible costs.

Procurement & price reasonability: for  $>€10,000$  (single or cumulative), provide supplier-selection justification + 3 quotes (Annex 49).

VAT handling: if not a VAT payer, VAT is eligible; if VAT payer with right to deduct, the base is net of VAT.



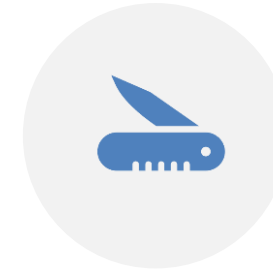
ACCEPTED PROOFS OF PAYMENT:  
PER GUIDE (CASH RECEIPT, BANK  
STATEMENT—NOT JUST A  
PAYMENT “CONFIRMATION”,  
COD/COURIER PROOF, ETC.). SZV  
ADVISES CASH RECEIPT (PPD) OR  
COD FOR E-SHOPS TO ENSURE  
ACCEPTABLE PROOF. ( )



NO INSTALMENT PURCHASES  
(INSTALLMENT PLANS ARE  
INELIGIBLE). KEEP ORIGINALS FOR  
INSPECTION; SUBMIT ALL REQUIRED  
ANNEXES BY THE STATED CUT-OFFS.



PASSING ON SUPPORT: APPROVED  
APPLICANT MUST TRANSFER THE  
GRANTED SHARE TO FINAL  
RECIPIENTS BY YEAR-END OF  
RECEIPT.



IF YOU WANT, I CAN TAILOR THESE  
BULLETS TO YOUR SPECIFIC  
PROJECT (E.G., EQUIPMENT  
SHOPPING LIST, YOUTH TRAINING,  
OR BREEDING TARGETS) AND SHAPE  
THEM INTO FINAL SLIDE LAYOUTS.

# Conclusion – Why Apiculture Matters for Rural Development

- **Beekeeping strengthens rural areas in ways few other activities can:**
- It creates **accessible income opportunities** for smallholders, women, youth, and older people.
- It enhances **local food security** through pollination and diverse farm production.
- It supports **biodiversity and healthy landscapes**, which are the foundation of resilient rural economies.
- It contributes to **local identity, tourism, and value-added products**, enriching rural markets.
- It encourages **community cooperation**, with cooperatives and associations improving skills, quality, and market access.
- **In essence:**
- **Apiculture is a small-scale activity with large-scale benefits— a catalyst for economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social inclusion in rural communities.**