

10th Caribbean Beekeeping Congress. – St Kitts Country Paper.

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Beekeeping in St Kitts

History of Beekeeping in St Kitts

- St. Kitts and Nevis has a rich recorded history of beekeeping. Eva Crane Trust (1985) sponsored some research and cited records dating back to when St Kitts was a French colony. In 1964, Pinchon referred to introduction of the honeybee to “*Saint Christophe*” in 1688, found in *The Archives Nationales*” located in Paris, France. They found no accounts of bees from France across the Caribbean that predates this.
- It seems that between 1688 and 1720 the formal practice of beekeeping may have died out. There were also records referring to ‘*wild colonies*’ in both St Kitts and her sister island – Nevis, believing that they had swarmed to Nevis from St Kitts in the Alexander Hamilton Museum on Nevis.
- The records further showed that honeybee queens were introduced to St Kitts and Nevis in the 1900s from Italy.

<https://www.evacranetrust.org/uploads/document/ddbae8233fbee076cc834101df840ac551fa3>

Pinchon, R. (1964) Quelques aspects de la nature MUX Antilles (Fort-de-France, Martinique : au

Published Audit – Solomon, 1994

- Number of beekeepers = 2 154 colonies = 77 per bee keeper
- Caribbean is an area of great concern because diseases have the potential to threaten the economic and environmental viability of the sector, with knock-on effects for crop pollination and the natural environment.
- In this report, Solomon finds that Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and St Kitts were free of brood diseases and Acarapis and Varroa mites. At best, it may be said that there have been no reported case of diseases or mites in these countries/islands.

Demographic profile of sector 2020

- President is Mr George Rogers. Tremendous energy and tireless commitment to the area.
- Last December, a new management was elected. Co-op Secretary is female.
- Majority of the communication occurs via a chat that includes 24 persons. Also have monthly meetings at the Department of Agriculture base and via ZOOM during lockdown.
- Five of these are female. Approximately half of the co-op are aged between 35 and 50. Approximately 25% aged under 35 and 25% aged over 50.

Statistics

1. Type of bees - Europeanised
2. Number of colonies – Approximately 200
3. Number of beekeeper by sex/age – Principally made up of farmers/agriculturalists, ‘backyard’ beekeepers and newcomers
4. Production Levels of various hives – Difficult to answer
5. Value-added hive-products – Beeswax, propolis as well as honey

UNESCO'S MAN & BIOSPHERE PROGRAMME OTIS JEFFERS – BEE THE BUZZ ON THE RESERVE PROJECT



UNESCO'S MAN & BIOSPHERE PROGRAMME



UNESCO'S MAN & BIOSPHERE PROGRAMME

- Together with 4 other young people in the Latin America & Caribbean, Otis has been selected to implement his own youth project. With 'Bee the Buzz of the Reserve', Otis will promote pollinators for crop production and various products of honey bees. This activity will teach young people in a practical manner how to produce honey, wax and other bi-products by creating a demonstration unit. It will contribute to the green economy by giving young people the opportunity to be entrepreneurs in bee-keeping, and will provide employment opportunities.
- This project, funded by the Flemish government of Belgium, aims to improve the socio-economic development of young people living in biosphere reserves in the Latin America and Caribbean region.
- More info: <https://en.unesco.org/node/305416>
- [Unesco Platform Vlaanderen UNESCO Youth St. Kitts - Nevis National Commission for Unesco](#)

Successes and Challenges to growth development

- **THE FEDERATION OF ST KITTS AND NEVIS HAS TAKEN STEPS TO REVIVE ITS BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY.**
- **THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS JOINED FORCES WITH THE EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WHICH IS BASED IN BARBADOS AND THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CO-OPERATION ON AGRICULTURE FOR A BEEKEEPING INVESTIGATIVE MISSION.**
- **REGISTRAR OF COOPERATIVES AT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CLYDE THOMPSON SAID THAT MANY PERSONS ARE UNAWARE THAT A FULLY FUNCTIONAL BEE KEEPERS COOPERATIVE PRODUCED LOCAL HONEY YEARS AGO.**
- **HE SAID A SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN THE PRODUCTION OF LOCAL HONEY, PROMPTED THE NEED TO REVIVE THE ONCE PROFITABLE INDUSTRY.**
- **“THE LOCAL PEOPLE DON’T TRUST THE IMPORTED HONEY BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT THE LOCAL HONEY IS OF GOOD QUALITY”, HE SAID.**
- <https://www.looptt.com/content/st-kitts-nevis-partners-argentina-boost-local-honey-industry>

- **Stennet 'Honey Man' Harvey 2012**
<https://www.sknvibes.com/news/newsdetails.cfm/66214>



- **St. Kitts Bees are thriving 2013**
- <http://www.beesfordevelopment.org/media/2742/chapter-15.pdf>



Eustace Caines mentoring in Florida 2014

<https://caribbeanbeekeeping.wordpress.com/2014/03/16/mentoring-st-kitts-beekeeper/>



Future Projects

<https://www.thestkittsnevisobserver.com/bee-keeping-a-growth-industry-in-caribbean-as-it-declines-in-us/>

“For decades, the Caribbean has counted on its pristine beaches — and Guyana on its lush rainforests — to draw millions of visitors. Now, the region’s countries are increasingly looking to broaden their draw with bee tourism — also known as apitourism — at a time the populations of more than 700 North American bee varieties are on the decline, according to the Center for Biological Diversity.”

The SKEP is derived from Agro-Tourism Demonstration Farm Cooperation Project



NATURE'S HARVEST HONEY FARM



<https://www.nookfarmhoney.co.uk/#!/Printed-canvas-20cm-x-20cm-Honey-Bee-&-Rosebay-Willow-Herb-Picture-free-P&P/p/250430425/category=0>

<https://quincehoneyfarm.co.uk/about-us/gallery>