

# 10th Caribbean Beekeeping Congress. – **The Bahamas** Country Paper November 25th, 2020

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Acting Country Representative and Technical Specialist

IICA Bahamas

# History of Beekeeping in The Bahamas



- Earliest records go back to the Benedictine Monks in the 1400s
- Mennonite Mission in North Andros in 1983
- Anecdotal information
- In 2015 Partnership with Gold Stream Ltd, Department of Cooperatives and IICA held the first Permapiculture workshop with Dr. Manuel Sanchez (Perone hives)
- Trained over 400 persons in beekeeping on 7 islands
- Still a fledgling industry

	Island name	Area	Area
		Km sq	Sq miles
1	<u>North Andros</u>	3,439	1,328
2	<u>Great Inagua</u>	1,615	596
3	<u>South Andros</u>	1,448	559
4	<u>Great Abaco</u>	1,146	442
5	<u>Grand Bahama</u>	1,096	423
6	<u>Long Island, Bahamas</u>	538	230
7	<u>Eleuthera</u>	457	176
8	<u>Cat Island</u>	387	150
9	<u>New Providence</u>	228	80
10	<u>Exuma</u>	204	79

Islands with  
Bee  
populations

# Demographic profile

- Type of bees – Apis melifera (Italians?)
- Number of colonies.
  - In The Bahamas there are approximately 800 plus hives and 65 beekeepers.
- Number of beekeepers with ages ranging from 20yrs to 70yrs old and 20% being women\*\*.
- Production Levels of various hives
  - Average 4 gallons per hive per year (inconclusive due to lack of records)

# Successes and Challenges to growth development

## Baseline of the Apiculture Sector in The Bahamas

- IICA Bioeconomy project for The Bahamas and Barbados
- Visited islands – Exuma and New Providence



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# Problems Identified in baseline studies



# Key Recommendations

- Implement innovation processes with the leading role of the actors involved.
- Innovation in production technology, transformation and adaptation technology in evaluation and preservation of better adapted local germplasm (eco-types), production of living material, nutritional management, monitoring and sanitary management prioritizing Varroosis, colony management for honey production, etc.
- Innovation in process technology, adaptation of the harvest, extraction and processing of honey to the conditions of the country, quality management and added value to bee products (honey, wax, royal jelly, pollen, propolis and apitoxin)
- Organizational innovation, through the preparation of territorial plans, organizational strengthening, environmental preservation and linkage with markets.



## Grand Bahama Youth Apiculture Development Programme (GBYADP)

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- Ages 17-35
- 2 day Introductory workshop with 60 participant
- 27 for the 16 week training
- January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018
- Partners
  - Office of The Prime Minister in Grand Bahama
  - Bahamas Development Bank
  - IICA
  - Department of Cooperatives



# Grand Bahama Youth Apiculture Development Programme

- Curriculum
  - Review of Introductory beekeeping workshop. A history of Beekeeping in Grand Bahama
  - Agro-Ecotourism Opportunities and creation of a business Plan
  - Beekeeping Equipment and site management and Extractions
  - Working a Colony Catching and Hiving Swarm

# Grand Bahama Youth Apiculture Development Programme (cont'd)

- Curriculum
  - Bee pests and diseases construction of low cost hives
  - Permapiculture
  - Forming a Cooperative and Financial recording keeping
  - Marketing products and the hives and business plan development (Products of the Hive)
  - Public Speaking and business writing
  - Customer Service



# GBYADP Holistic approach

- Toastmasters
- Product development
- Career fairs
- CWA 2018



# Instructors

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- Nicholas Weaver – University of Georgia
- Bo Sterk – U of Florida Caribbean Bee College
- Dr. Kevin Bethel – Medical Dr. and Beekeeper (Grand Bahama)
- Nathan Burrows – Marketing and Branding Specialist (NP)
- Charles Burrows – Local Beekeeper (NP)
- Rueben Rahming – Local Beekeeper (NP)
- Kim Robertson – St. Augustine Florida
- Dr. Manuel Sanchez – IICA Guatemala Rep
- Mrs. Deborah Pratt - Business professional (GB)
- Demekas Foster – DTM, trainer and professional public speaker
- Shacara Lightbourne – IICA Technical Specialist



# Achievements of GBYADP

- Career fair
- Agriculture Expo in NP
- Presentation at the Rotary Club in Grand Bahama
- Danish reporter visiting with the MOT
- Received a grant of \$1000 from Rotary Club of St. Augustine
- Received grant from Cable Cares Foundation of \$1000 for documentary
- GEF SGP
- Meeting with the US Charge d' Affairs
- Loans
- Caribbean Bee College 2018

FREEPORT, Grand Bahama — A young Bahamian female is taking full advantage of the government's Apiary (Bee) Program introduced by The Office of the Prime Minister over a year ago.

Rakrisha Forbes (Krishi Forbes on Facebook) is doing big things producing raw organic honey right in her backyard in Pinedale, Eight Mile Rock, Grand Bahama.



*Recalling the first time she got stung, Forbes said it was a painful experience, but she has gotten use to it*

Forbes took part in the government's 16-week Apiary Course, which Minister of State for Grand Bahama Senator Kwasi Thompson called a grand opportunity, as the demand for raw organic honey and products made from honey grows worldwide.

Forbes produces Natural Honey & Flavoured Honey — Ginger, Garlic & Lime, Beeswax Candles & Natural Honey & Honey Oats Soap — and she is in the process of testing honey and milk soap.

This young entrepreneur also executes hive removals from homes, business places, anywhere in The Bahamas or the world.

Forbes admits that at first she wasn't excited about the thought of Bee Keeping, but on the second day after seeing the hive removal she says she was into it.

Recalling the first time she got stung, Forbes said it was a painful experience, but she has gotten use to it and has invested in several bee suits to help protect her from stings.

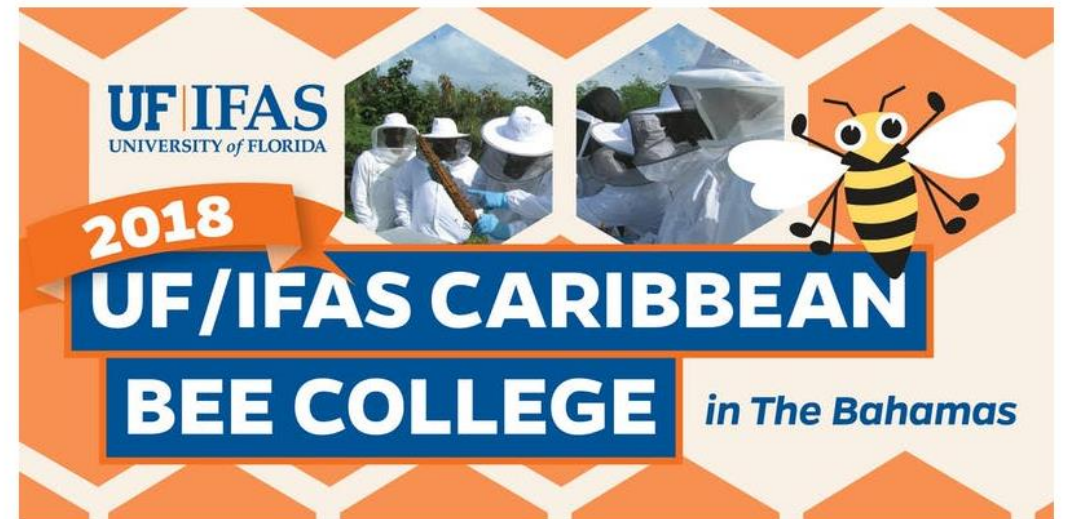
Forbes praised the government for introducing the Apiary Program, which she called exciting, unique and fun.

Forbes is working with another exceptional young Bahamian, Kevin Wildgoose of Bartlett Hill, Eight Mile Rock. This dynamic duo is transforming the Bee Business into a Big Business.

BAHAMAS NEWS

## YOUNG BAHAMIAN ENTREPRENEUR TURNING "BEE BUSINESS" INTO "BIG BUSINESS"

April 16, 2019 - by Oswald Brown, Editor



# Grand Bahama Beekeepers Coop

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- The Grand Bahama Beekeeping Cooperative Society Limited: local representative cooperative for beekeeping research, standardization, education and development in Grand Bahama. It has 17 members, mainly women and young people.
- The organization provides services of bee removals, pollination, bee equipment rentals and hive maintenance. Some members have developed cosmetic bee products like soaps, lipsticks and bee souvenirs.





## Value added Products

- Soaps
- Lotions
- Souvenirs
- Honey comb
- Light and Dark Honey



# Products

- Luminaries
- Lip balm
- Bee boxes
- Honey soaps
- Painted hive boxes





Value added Products

- Shoe Polish
- Bees wax snack wraps
- Lip balm
- Honey straws
- Honey baskets



- Hive Removals  
New Providence  
and  
Grand Bahama  
\$200 USD and  
UP





# Hurricane Dorian

- 104 in Abaco and 115 hive boxes with colonies lost
- Thousands of acres of pine forests destroyed due to salt water intrusion
- 30 beekeepers affected



# Rebuilding after Dorian

- IICA Rapid Response Action and Mannlake donation
- Funds raised at Apimondia 2019
- GB Beekeepers \$20,000 in funding office of the Prime Minister in Grand Bahama



# BAD NEWS

 Hurricane Season 202

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## Bee swarm stings man to death

[Share](#) | August 14, 2019



AN 82-year-old man was stung to death when a swarm of bees attacked him as he was doing yard work at his Freeport home last week.

Keith Finley died in hospital on Friday - two days after Wednesday's attack at his home on Dolphin and Drumfish Street, Caravel Beach. His wife, Pamela, said she "screamed in horror" as her husband sat helplessly at the front door "covered with black bees from head to toe."

This is the first fatal bee attack of a human on Grand Bahama, according to a Bahamas National Trust official, who is warning residents to be "cautious" of their surroundings when outside. Two dogs in the area also recently died after bee attacks, before Mr Finley was stung.

[Click here](#) to read more at The Tribune

News date : 08/14/2019 Category : [About Bahamians](#), [Obituaries](#), [Tribune Stories](#)

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### New Warning Issued Over 'Aggressive Bees'

As of Wednesday, July 17, 2019

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By DENISE MAYCOCK

Tribune Freeport Reporter

[dmaycock@tribunemedia.net](mailto:dmaycock@tribunemedia.net)

A WARNING was issued yesterday advising Freeport residents to be aware of "aggressive bees" in the area of Wellington Drive and Ponce de Leon.

Police were called to the area around 9am yesterday after a beehive was disturbed by workmen at Sanitation Services.

ASP Terecita Pinder reported no one was harmed, but officers were on the scene to ensure residents were aware of the situation and warned them not to venture outside.

She said professionals were called in to assist in the removal of the beehive.

There have been recent "aggressive" bee attacks occurring in Grand Bahama, particularly in Freeport and East Grand Bahama.



# How A Honey Company In Savannah Is Helping 15 Beekeepers In The Bahamas



Claudia Alarcón Contributor @ Dining

On the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, it's refreshing to receive some good news to remind us that even one person can inspire a positive change that benefits local communities and their environments.

Ted Dennard, a lifelong beekeeper and founder of Savannah Bee Company, had dedicated his life's work to protecting pollinators. Joining forces with Tami Enright, a fellow beekeeper and environmental educator in South Carolina, they created The Bee Cause Project, a nonprofit dedicated to empower students, teachers, and community members to learn about, and protect, the honey bee.



Forbes



The Savannah Bee Company and The Bee Cause Project partner with the Exuma Foundation to support ...

## Community Partners

- CATHERINE Booker at Exuma Foundation
- Savannah Bee Company – Bee Cause Project
- Training in Beekeeping and Marketing on 4 islands in 2019
- Observation hives



# Bee Culture

The Magazine of American Beekeeping



RESOURCES / CATEGORIES / STORE / SUBSCRIBE

SEPTEMBER 8, 2017

## BEEKEEPING IN THE BAHAMAS



By: Jennifer Berry

The thought of taking a 12-24 hour old larvae and transforming it into a queen is amazing.

It's been almost 20 years since I started rearing queens, and, believe it or not, I still find it just as exciting as when I first started. There's something magical about raising your own queens. Taking an average worker larvae and sending her down the path to queenhood and lifting her into a life as a royal instead of just another "one of the girls." Hmm, this reminds me of something from when I was a little girl. Ahhh yes, Cinderella and the Disney effect, where all little girls want to be converted into the beautiful princess!



Jennifer Berry

You know the story. Once upon a time there was a young girl who was being mistreated, and hence felt downtrodden and unappreciated. Until one day, a magical Fairy Godmother fluttered out of nowhere and began to transform the poor soul. She started by flicking her wand and poof, the perfect makeup flawlessly applied. Another swoosh and bam! Her tangled locks swirled into an awesome hairdo. Next, the Fairy Godmother spun her about and the tattered jeans and t-shirt disappeared being replaced with a beautiful gown decked out with all sorts of bling.



# University of Georgia

- University of Georgia, Honey Bee Program: program from the University of Georgia (UGA), United States dedicated to increase humanity's knowledge of bee biology, bee management, and crop pollination and to deliver that knowledge in the most effective manner to interested users. This program led two workshops and supported a trip for 4 beekeepers from Exuma to the UGA/Young Harris Beekeeping Institute.







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**WHAT'S ALL THE BUZZ ABOUT?**

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This introductory workshop would consist of theory and practical to educate the participants about the biology and ecology and the technical aspects of beekeeping. The practical aspect would include visits to apiaries on Eleuthera and construction of bee boxes and familiarization of tools used for beekeeping. This introductory workshop will assist in identifying youth and individuals that are truly interested in the One Eleuthera Foundation's more extensive bee programme.

**Workshop Objectives**

- To introduce individuals on Eleuthera to beekeeping, its benefits to The Bahamas and opportunity as a viable business.
- To create beekeeping jobs in Eleuthera and create a market for bee products in Eleuthera.
- To train participants in agribusiness entrepreneurship and establish apiaries in Eleuthera.
- To train participants in bee safety, the construction of bee boxes and use of equipment.

**14<sup>TH</sup> - 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**  
**9:00 A.M. – 5:00PM**

Venue : South Eleuthera Emergency Partners (SEEP) Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera.




**TRAINER**  
**SHACARA O. LIGHTBOURNE**  
ACTING COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE - TECHNICAL SPECIALIST  
 INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR THE COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)  
 NASSAU N.P. BAHAMAS

For more information and to register, please contact our Extension & Communications Officer  
 Joan Telle at 1(242) 825-4053 or email joantelle@oneleuthera.org.






**INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF BEEKEEPING WEBINAR**

**DEON D. GIBSON**  
COMMUNITY FARM PROJECT COORDINATOR  
 ONE ELEUTHERA FOUNDATION

**MODERATOR**

Want to become a Beekeeper? This webinar caters for backyard beekeepers and small farmers, or anyone with keen interest to understand beekeeping, about bee anatomy and biology, how to choose bees, set up a hive, and choose appropriate gear and equipment. Come join us to learn the essentials about getting started in your Beekeeping journey!

**5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**  
**12NOON – 2:00PM**



Register via URL:  
<https://trimurico/n8okZL>




**SPEAKER**  
**SHACARA O. LIGHTBOURNE**  
ACTING COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE - TECHNICAL SPECIALIST  
 INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR THE COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)  
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For more information and to register, please contact our Extension & Communications Officer  
 Joan Telle at 1(242) 825-4053 or email joantelle@oneleuthera.org.

## Community Partners

- 242 BeeMasters Prison beekeepers programme with BAMSI
- One Eleuthera Foundation
- Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources
- Department of Cooperatives
- Department of Environmental Health Services





## Future Projects

- Development of Standards for the Beekeeping Industry in The Bahamas
- Opportunity to export Queens - Exuma
- Capacity building for The Bahamas National Beekeepers Cooperative Society
- Apitourism
- Government funding for Fishers, Farmers and Beekeepers \$5million US



Thank You!!

