



THE PRESENT DEVELOPMENT OF BEEKEEPING IN UGANDA

by E.C.B. NSUBUGA-NVULE

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The physical features of Uganda bear some similarity to those of her neighbours Tanzania and Kenya, and the natural vegetation of the country likewise provides forage for bees.

In 1969 Professor G.F. Townsend from Canada visited Uganda and proposed an action programme that could be adopted with a view to modernizing beekeeping in Uganda. The programme was based on training staff in neighbouring Tanzania, introducing improved hives, and establishing honey collection centres. Some of the senior officers went to Canada for further beekeeping studies.

Uganda's aim is to become self-sufficient in both honey and beeswax. To date 30,000 improved Johnson box hives have been distributed and are in use, and an extension and training programme is in operation. Some local demonstration centres have been established which are in the charge of the extension programme. In order to try to stimulate honey production a limited amount of planting of good nectar producers has been carried out where the largest hive concentrations occur.

Both honey and beeswax are processed at the local collecting centres. The bulk honey is bottled at a food-packaging company for local sale. Beeswax is used in tanneries for treating hides and skins, in sugar works and other industrial processing, and the rest is exported.

The Johnson box hive, developed by the Beekeeping Section, is based on a hive introduced by Mr. E. Johnson in the 1950s at a demonstration farm in Teso, Western Uganda. A horizontal rectangular box, which can be opened by removing either end, is divided centrally to provide two compartments which are baited with beeswax to attract swarms. Before harvesting the honey the beekeeper lifts the hive, and takes honey from the heavier end.