

SCIENTIFIC METHOD OF HONEY PRODUCTION



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Introduction : Beekeeping refers only to rearing of domesticated honeybee species and their management. Honey bees help in pollinating many of the important cross-pollinated crops and also provide honey. First attempts to keep bees in movable frame hives were made during 1882 in Bengal and during 1883-84 in Punjab. Honey is a balanced nutritious food having high medicinal value. Honey is a balanced nutritious food having high medicinal value.

Species of honeybees : The common species of honeybees in India are :

Rock bee (*Apis dorsata*): They are giant bees found all over India in sub-mountainous regions up to an altitude of 2700 m. They build single comb nests with an area up to 1-2 m or more. They are good honey gathers with an average yield of 50-80 kg per colony

Little bee (*Apis florea*) : They are the smallest of the true honeybees found in plains of India up to the altitude of 500 m. They build single vertical combs. They are poor honey yielders and yield about 200-900 g of honey per colony.

Indian bee (*Apis cerana indica*) : They are the domesticated species, which construct multiple parallel combs with an average honey yield of 8-10 kg per colony per year

European bee [Italian bee] (*Apis mellifera*) : This is the most widely distributed and commercially reared honeybee species in the world. They are also similar in habits to Indian bees, which build parallel combs. They are bigger than all other honeybees except *Apis dorsata*. The average production per colony is 25-40 kg, with foraging range between 2-3 kms.

Stingless bee (*Trigona iridipennis*) : In addition to the above, another species is also present known as stingless bees. They are not truly stingless, but sting is poorly developed. They make nests in the ground, hollows of trees, bamboo, rocks or cracks of walls. Honey and brood cells are separate in the nest. They are efficient pollinators. They yield 300-400 g of honey per year

BEE KEEPING :

The following points are to be taken into consideration to start beekeeping:

1. Pollen and nectar source
2. Site
3. Good Aeration
4. Water
5. Wind-Breaks
6. Shade
7. Season

Swarming :

- # Swarming is the natural instinct of honey bees to reproduce its colonies.
- # By swarming, strong colonies are divided naturally.
- # It occurs mostly when the colony population is at its peak.
- # Some of the several reasons for swarming are sudden honey flow, sudden failure of queen to lay eggs, congestion in the colony, want of breeding space, bad ventilation etc.

