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Improving Honey Production and Marketing: an Application of Outgrower Beekeeping Model in Rural Communities

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Abstract

Global honey consumption is projected to exceed \$2.8 billion by 2024 (Strategyr, 2019). Despite the increasing demand for honey and its related products, Africa contributes only 7.8% of global honey market. Ghana's vegetation is favourable for all year beekeeping and honey production but the sector is challenged by the lack of appropriate inputs and equipment, bush fires, lack of financial support, lack of training for beekeepers, adulteration, fear of bees, among others. Despite the numerous challenges faced by the sub-sector, the Federation of Ghana Beekeepers Association (FGBA) estimates Ghana's honey production potential to be at 500,000 tons per annum and worth about \$1.5 billion. Despite its great potentials, the beekeeping sub-sector in Ghana has over the years failed to attract adequate public sector support and has largely remained a hobby among a few interested farmers. This can be largely attributed to the general lack of information on the sub-sector which poses a challenge in demonstrating the true opportunities in the industry. This project aims at proposing and establishing an outgrower beekeeping business model that can be implemented in some selected rural communities in Ghana by 2022. The proposed outgrower beekeeping model focuses on promoting community-based beekeeping system that supports women empowerment and youth development. The model seeks to create community-based honey production centres that will coordinate the collection and processing of honey for onward market distribution. The project concluded that beekeeping appears to be a profitable and sustainable business enterprise which has great potential. The proposed outgrower beekeeping model suggests to be the best way through which Ghana can increase its honey production whilst improving the livelihoods of farmers and youth in rural communities. This project does not only come with great financial rewards to stakeholders but also social and environmental benefits.

Keywords: Beekeeping, community, development, Ghana, Honey, model, Outgrower, youth