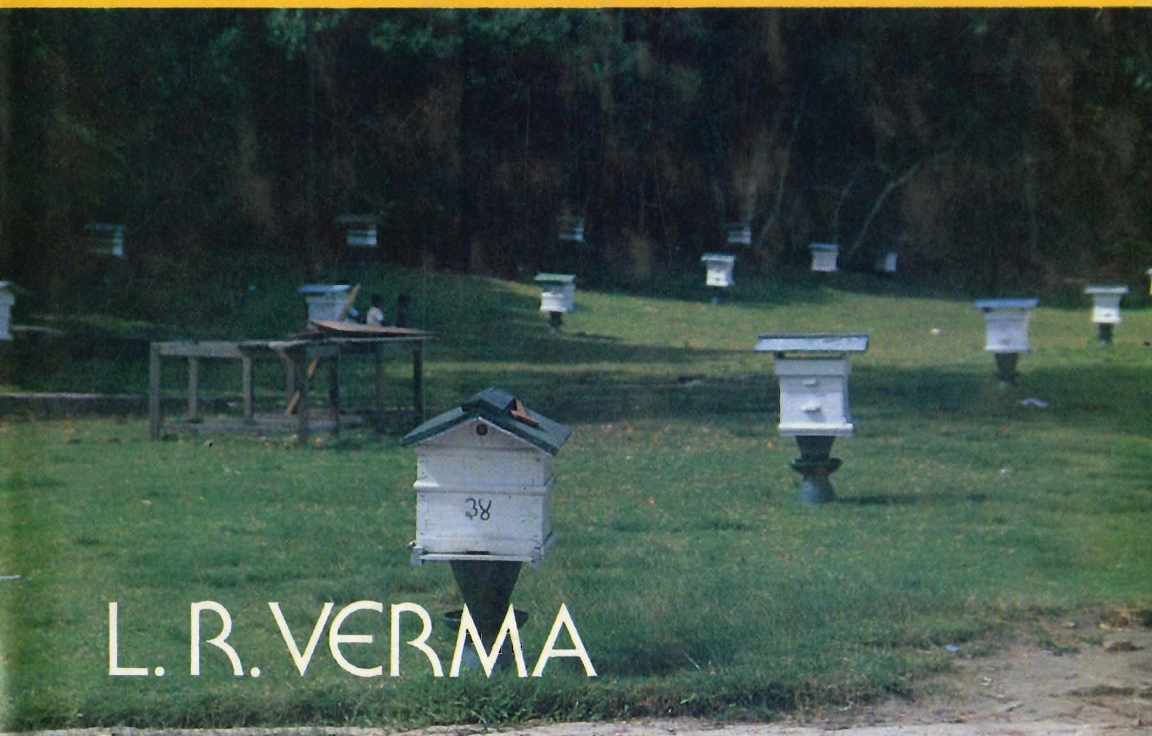




BEEKEEPING

In Integrated Mountain Development



L. R. VERMA

This important and interesting book on apiculture is unique in the sense that, besides presenting a comprehensive review, on scientific and practical aspects of beekeeping, it covers the economic and developmental aspects of apiculture as a cottage industry and analyses its prospects based on the ecological resources and socioeconomic conditions prevailing in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. Against this background, the conclusions and recommendations drawn by the author will be relevant to other developing countries.

This analysis of a diverse but specialized subject will be of immediate use to agricultural and other applied scientists, extension workers, policy makers, planners, and aid agencies and also go far beyond the sphere of its primary users to propagate the knowledge concerning the intrinsic value of bees and beekeeping to environment and society as a whole.

BEEKEEPING

**In Integrated Mountain
Development:
Economic and Scientific
Perspectives**

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In Integrated Mountain Development: Economic and Scientific Perspectives

L.R. VERMA

Supported by

**International Centre for Integrated Mountain
Development
Kathmandu, Nepal**

ICIMOD Senior Fellowship Series, No. 4



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Dedicated to my father

SHRI CHET RAM

who even from a very remote village of the Shimla hills
enabled me to adopt a career in
scientific teaching and research

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xv
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Chapter 2. Apiculture in Mountain Farming Systems	5
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Apiculture in the Mountain Eco-systems	5
2.3 Apiculture and Mountain Perspectives	10
Chapter 3. Apiculture and Integrated Rural Development	13
3.1 Introduction	13
3.2 Apiculture and Rural Economy	14
3.2.1 India	14
3.2.2 China	15
3.2.3 Pakistan	15
3.2.4 Bangladesh	16
3.3 Apiculture and Food Security	16
3.4 Apiculture and Nutritional Security	18
3.5 Apiculture and Women's Development	20
Chapter 4. Apiculture and Mountain Crop Productivity	23
4.1 Introduction	23
4.2 Historical Perspective of Pollination Ecology	24
4.3 Advantages of Bee Pollination	26
4.4 Principles of Bee Pollination	26
4.4.1 Colony Strength	27
4.4.2 Number and Time Placement of Colonies	27
4.4.3 Distribution of Colonies in the Field/Orchard	28
4.4.5 Weather Conditions	28
4.4.6 Attracting Bees to a Crop in Bloom	28

4.5 Apple Pollination in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya	29
4.5.1 Distribution, Abundance and Diversity of Insect Pollinators	30
4.5.2 Role of Honeybees on Yield and Quality of Apple Fruit	31
4.5.3 Comparative Foraging Behaviour of <i>Apis cerana</i> and <i>Apis mellifera</i> on Apple Bloom	37
4.5.4 Effect of Orchard Altitude on the Foraging Behaviour of <i>Apis cerana</i> and <i>Apis mellifera</i>	42
4.5.5 Renting of Bee Hives for Pollination	43
4.5.6 Orchard and Bee Management Practices in Relation to Apple Pollination	45
4.6 Pollination of Temperate Fruits Crops Other than Apple	46
4.7 Apiculture and Vegetable Seed Production	47
4.7.1 Isolation Distance in Relation to Pure Seed Production	55
4.8 Apiculture and Oilseed Production	58
4.9 Miscellaneous Crops	59
4.10 Apiculture and Pesticides	62
4.10.1 Bee Poisoning Symptoms	63
4.10.2 Protective Strategies Recommended	64
4.10.3 Relative Toxicity of Some Biocides to Asian Hive Bee, <i>Apis cerana</i>	65

Chapter 5. Status and Economics of Beekeeping in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Countries

69

5.1 Introduction	69
5.2 Himachal Pradesh (northern India)	70
5.3 Nepal	79
5.4 Bangladesh	84
5.5 Pakistan	85
5.6 China	95
5.7 Bhutan	99
5.8 Burma	105
5.9 Conclusions	106

Chapter 6. Apicultural Practices

109

6.1 Honey hunting	109
6.1.1 Honey-hunting Equipment	110
6.1.2 Honey-hunting Method	110
6.2 Traditional Beekeeping	112
6.2.1 Log Hive	112

6.2.2 Fixed Wall Hives	116
6.2.3 Miscellaneous Traditional Hives	118
6.2.4 Honey Harvesting from Traditional Hives	119
6.3 Modern Hive Beekeeping	120
6.3.1 Historical Perspectives	120
6.3.2 Evolution and Standardization of Modern	
<i>Apis cerana</i> Bee Hive In India	121
6.3.3 Modern Beekeeping with <i>Apis cerana</i> in Other	
Parts of Hindu Kush-Himalayan Countries	130

Chapter 7. Hive Products 139

7.1 Honey	139
7.1.1 Analytical Studies on Asian Honey	140
7.1.2 Honey Production and Marketing Strategies	
in China	146
7.1.3 Honey Production and Trade in Hindu Kush-	
Himalayan Countries other than China	152
7.1.4 Suggestions for Improvements of Honey	
Processing and Marketing	158
7.2 Beeswax	160
7.3 Pollen	164
7.4 Royal Jelly	165
7.4.1 Production Technology	165
7.5 Bee Venom	166
7.6 Propolis	168

Chapter 8. Honeybee Resources: Biology and Management 169

8.1 Geographic Distribution of Asian Honeybees	169
8.2 <i>Apis cerana</i>	170
8.2.1 Morphometrics	170
8.2.2 Sub-species and Geographic Ecotypes	193
8.2.3 Selection studies on <i>Apis cerana</i>	200
8.2.4 Breeding studies	201
8.2.5 Behaviour studies	207
8.2.6 Diseases and Enemies	212
8.2.7 Winter Management of Colonies	214
8.3 Exotic <i>Apis mellifera</i>	215
8.3.1 China	217
8.3.2 India	218
8.3.3 Pakistan	220
8.3.4 Afghanistan	221
8.3.5 Burma	222

8.4 Comparative Biology of <i>Apis cerana</i> and <i>Apis mellifera</i>	223
8.4.1 Honey Yield	223
8.4.2 Brood Rearing	223
8.4.3 Flight Ability	224
8.4.4 Olfactory Sense	228
8.4.5 Foraging Hours	228
8.4.6 Fanning Behaviour	228
8.4.7 Hoarding Behaviour	228
8.4.8 Aggressive Behaviour	229
8.4.9 Robbing Behaviour	232
8.4.10 Temperature Regulation	233
8.4.11 Mating Behaviour and Fertility	235
8.4.12 Diseases and Enemies	236
8.4.13 Inbreeding Problem	238
8.5 <i>Apis dorsata</i>	239
8.5.1 Biology and Management	239
8.5.2 Morphometrics	241
8.6 <i>Apis florea</i>	244
8.6.1 Biology and Management	244
8.6.2 Morphometrics	245
8.7 Origin, Evolution and Cytology of Asian Honeybees	246
8.7.1 Origin and Evolution	246
8.7.2 Cytology	248

Chapter 9. Honey Plant Resources	253
9.1 Introduction	253
9.2 Melissopalynology, Bee Botony and Floral Calendars	280
9.3 Nectar Secretion Studies	289
9.4 Pollen Collecting Behaviour of <i>Apis cerana</i>	296
9.5 Ecophysiology of <i>Plectranthus</i> sp.	301
9.6 Linkages of Beekeeping to Social Forestry	305
Epilogue	307
References	317
Index	351

Foreword

Throughout the developing countries of the world, mountain areas have been characterized by predominant subsistence economies which are now becoming critical. There can be no doubt that mountain resources and environments are deteriorating at an unprecedented rate and that increasing numbers of people and mountain communities are under considerable stress. Such tendencies are more pronounced in the agricultural sector which, defined broadly, includes all land-based activities, such as crop farming, horticulture, forestry, and livestock rearing. Many small and marginal farmers, as well as the landless, do not produce sufficient food or earn sufficient income to feed their families adequately throughout the year. Concentrated efforts to overcome these problems have been made over the past 10 years, but the results so far have been quite negligible. Under these circumstances, alternative strategies for sustainable mountain agriculture should entail full exploitation of underutilized resources in order to diversify the income and food sources of mountain people; giving due consideration to ecological sustainability and environmental safeguards.

Mountain Farming Systems' programmes at ICIMOD are aimed at the search for such non-landbased activities or options in the context of the sustainable development of mountain agriculture in terms of resource base availability, resource use/management practices, and production flow. Within this context, ICIMOD has identified beekeeping (Apiculture) as one such income- and food-generating activity which offers comparative advantages for mountain areas with positive ecological consequences. Beekeeping has been closely linked with the cultural heritage of the rural mountain population. This activity offers options for communities in the economically marginal category, because it is a low investment activity. In addition, it is flexible enough to match any scale of operation or any category of manpower. Hive products are in demand both locally as well as in foreign markets. The pollination activities of honeybees boost the productivity of several mountain crops and help in the conservation of forest and grassland ecosystems.

This book, "Beekeeping in Integrated Mountain Development: Economic and Scientific Perspectives", was written by Professor L.R. Verma during his tenure as a Senior Research Fellow at ICIMOD. This Senior Research Programme has been facilitated by a grant from Ford Foundation. Such a fellowship programme enables senior and distinguished professionals to undertake a period of individual "sabbatical" research and publication on a subject of direct relevance to key issues of integrated mountain development. The award of this fellowship to Professor Verma, a well-known authority on apiculture, was an appropriate choice, keeping in mind the vital importance of this subject in sustainable mountain farming systems and integrated rural development.

This important and interesting book on apiculture is unique in this sense that, besides presenting a comprehensive review on scientific and practical aspects of beekeeping, it covers the economic and developmental aspects of apiculture as a cottage industry and analyses its prospects based on the ecological resources and socioeconomic conditions prevailing in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. Against this background, the conclusions and recommendations drawn by the author will be relevant to other developing countries.

It is my hope that Professor Verma's professional analysis of a diverse but specialized subject will be of immediate use to agricultural and other applied scientists, extension workers, policy makers, planners, and aid agencies and also go far beyond the sphere of its primary users to propagate the knowledge concerning the intrinsic value of bees and beekeeping to the environment and society as a whole.

E.F. TACKE
Director, ICIMOD

Preface

Apiculture (Beekeeping) as a non-landbased income-generating activity is now becoming an important component of present-day strategies for sustainable mountain agriculture and integrated rural development programmes. The role of beekeeping in improving the subsistence economy of rural communities, especially those living in the developing countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region, cannot be overlooked as it has always been linked with the cultural and natural heritage of mountain ecosystems and their people.

In recent years many valuable books have been published on beekeeping with the European honeybee, *Apis mellifera*, especially for use in developed countries, but still there is hardly a single reference book available on the Asiatic species of honeybees which require a different beekeeping perspective due to different ecological resources, technological levels, and socioeconomic conditions. To bridge this gap, Dr. Colin Rosser, Director, ICIMOD, offered me a Senior Research Fellowship, funded by Ford Foundation, to review the state-of-the-art in this important subject and also to suggest strategies for its further development and improvement, especially in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan regions.

The first section of this book (Chapters 1 to 5) is intended to serve as a guide to policy makers, planners, administrators, rural developers and agricultural and forestry experts to make them aware of the importance of beekeeping in providing extra food, cash income, nutritional benefits, pollination of crops, employment, and improvement of environmental health. It is hoped that this section will arouse considerable interest in Government, non-Government, and funding agencies for their continuing commitment to beekeeping development programmes. The second section (Chapters 6 to 9) deals with the scientific and practical aspects of beekeeping with both native and exotic species of honeybees. It focuses on their biology and management based on ecological and appropriate technological considerations for the Hindu Kush-Himalayan countries. In this section, an attempt has been made to review the up-to-date literature on apicultural research and devel-

opment programmes, in this region, that is suitable for researchers, extension workers, and beekeepers; as well as for classroom reference. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are drawn for the promotion and development of the beekeeping industry in Asia in general and in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region in particular.

L.R. VERMA

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Among my former and present graduate students from the department of Bio-sciences, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla, I am especially thankful to Dr. V.K. Mattu, Dr. P.C. Dulta, Dr. B.S. Rana, Dr. M.P. Singh, Dr. Neelam Mattu, Dr. R.S. Rana, Miss Roopa Kumari, Miss Usha Mahajan, Miss Leelamma, Miss Alka Sharma, Miss Anju Sharma, Mr. P.C. Sharma, Mr. Pushpinder Chauhan, Mr. Vipin Kumar, Miss Sanjeevan and Miss Maya. Various data have been drawn from their graduate theses and publications.

I have made extensive use of the International Bee Research Association Library in Cardiff, U.K., and this is gratefully acknowledged. I must express my gratitude to Dr. Eva Crane, Honorary Life President and Scientific Consultant to the International Bee Research Association, Cardiff, Wales; Prof. Dr. F. Ruttner, Director, Institut für Bienenkunde, Goethe University, Frankfurt, West Germany; Dr. Rafiq Ahmad, Chief Scientific Officer, NARC, Islamabad, Pakistan; and the Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi, for their permission to use original tables and figures.

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L.R. VERMA