

HONEYBEES IN MOUNTAIN AGRICULTURE

Editor

L.R. VERMA



Honeybees in Mountain Agriculture

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International Centre for Integrated
Mountain Development, Kathmandu



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PROCEEDINGS OF

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT MEETING
ON
BEEKEEPING DEVELOPMENT IN THE
HINDU KUSH-HIMALAYAN REGION

Kathmandu, Nepal.
21st-23rd June, 1989

Organized by
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN
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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, HMG, NEPAL

And
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OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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Foreword

Today, the entire Hindu Kush-Himalayan region is facing a near crisis situation, both economical and environmental. National development strategies in this region are therefore being reoriented with major emphasis on food, income, nutrition and ecological security, especially for the unprivileged. In this task, ICIMOD, being the only International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development in the region has a special role to play. The primary objective is to promote economically and environmentally sound programmes for the socioeconomic upliftment of the mountain farmers living at or below subsistence level. Apiculture (Beekeeping) is one such activity which fits very well into the policies and programmes of ICIMOD in relation to sustainable development of mountain agriculture. Apiculture has been closely linked with the cultural heritage of the rural people of the mountain areas and is an excellent source of nutritious food and cash income. This non-land based activity does not require high cost technology and forms an integral part of different mountain ecosystems with positive ecological consequences only. Apiculture and honeybees render essential ecological services through cross-pollination of both wild and cultivated plants and contribute to saving them from extinction.

The central theme of the Expert Meeting held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 21st to 23rd June, 1989 was mountain apiculture for sustainable agriculture and integrated rural development. It was, therefore, planned and organized in a somewhat different manner than the several international conferences on this subject held in the recent past by different agencies such as FAO, IBRA, APIMONDIA and CIDA. Besides discussing important aspects of bee biology and management in mountain areas, the major emphasis was on creating awareness amongst the policy makers, planners in different Government organizations, and international donor agencies regarding the role of apiculture in solving the different economic, nutritional, ecological, and social problems, of mountain rural communities.

In this Expert Meeting, successful beekeeping experiences of countries such as China, one of the major producers and exporters of honey

and other hive products in the world, have been reported. Similarly, Himachal Pradesh in northern India has taken a lead in utilizing honeybees in apple orchards for pollination purposes to boost production and improve quality. Such success stories can be of help to other countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region where initiatives have been taken to develop apiculture on modern scientific lines.

More than 50 experts from various fields such as development planning, economics, genetic resources, horticulture, and entomology, as well as donor agencies, participated in this meeting, to discuss how apiculture can help mountain farmers in food and income generation, in increasing the yield and quality of different agricultural crops, and in overcoming the problem of malnutrition.

ICIMOD is indebted to the co-sponsors of this Expert Meeting: the Ministry of Agriculture, HMG, Nepal and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. It was a great honour to all of us that the inaugural session was chaired by Mr. Janak Bahadur Shah, Hon'ble Assistant Minister for Agriculture, HMG, Nepal and Mr. Krishna Charan Shrestha, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, HMG, Nepal inaugurated the meeting with a thought-provoking and stimulating address.

I must express my sincere thanks to Prof. L.R. Verma of ICIMOD, who acted as Convenor of this Expert Meeting and also contributed greatly in editing this report. I acknowledge with pleasure the efforts made by the former Director of ICIMOD, Dr. Colin Rosser, for initiating and organizing this meeting. The support received from the professional and administrative staff of ICIMOD is sincerely acknowledged.

E.F. TACKE
Director, ICIMOD