Apiary management

Apiary should be located where there is bee forage in the neighborhood and water within a 3 kilometre radius. The hive should be suspended at least 3 metres from the ground level.

Inspect the bee hives after every 2 weeks to know hive status and harvesting time.

Extraction of honey and beeswax

Honey is extracted using a centrifuge machine and the honey-wax mixture is filtered through a fine mesh into a container.

Good quality honey crystallizes at low temperatures and liquefies on warming.
**Introduction**

The production of honey in Kenya's hot dry areas has been drastically affected by poor hive occupation.

The common hives used are log hive, Kenya top bar hive and Langstroth hives and their bee occupancy and honey production are low.

**Common beehives**

1. **The log hive**
   This is the traditional hive which is hollow and covered with pieces of wood at the ends with bee exit and entry holes.

   The bees construct honey combs in regular half circles, slanting half circles or along the length of the roof. This hive produces 15 kg of honey per harvest and has 75% occupancy.

2. **The Kenya Top Bar Hive (KTBH)**
   This has bars hanging from the upper section with wax material as a foundation upon which bees build their combs.

   The top is covered with iron sheet. Occupancy is about 45% and average honey production is 20 kg per harvest.

3. **The langstroth bee hive**
   The langstroth comprises 2 boxes placed on top of each other. The lower box (the brood box) is separated from the upper box (the super box) by the queen excluder. This hive has an occupancy of 30% in the best conditions. Honey production is 10 kg per harvest.

4. **Kapkuikui Super Log Hive**
   This is a new hive that combines modern and traditional knowledge.

   How to make Kapkuikui hive
   **Step 1:**
   A hollow wooden log is split into 2 lengthwise.

   **Step 2:**
   The 2 ends are fitted with wooden cylindrical covers.

   **Step 3:**
   The internal framework has wax rings that offer a foundation from where the bees start constructing honey combs.

   To make bees construct their combs in the regular half circles, wax is introduced. Hive occupancy is about 75% and up to 18 kg of honey are produced.