REASONS FOR BEEKEEPING

**Income**

Beekeeping is an agricultural and business activity. Honey and beeswax can be sold for income generation. Income enables us meet our day-to-day needs like education, hospital bills.

**Food And Nutrition**

Honey can be consumed as food and for hot beverages.

**Employment**

Beekeepers can set up collection centers in their villages and supply their local association. Even with small quantities buyers can be attracted to buy from the village association. Good presentation and competitive pricing will achieve good sales.

**4. HEALTH**

Honey is used to treat illnesses like coughing. Honey is used in the treatment of burns and cuts.
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN APIARY

Site selection

Choose a location with trees, a reasonable distance away from the homestead and the public. Trees provide shade and food for the bees. Bees can be kept near the house. Take care to provide a flight path for your bees, making sure it doesn’t interfere with people or animals. Keep the grass short in the apiary. Trees make good hive stands and they keep bees out of harm’s way.

Different ways of placing hives

If there are no suitable trees you can make hive stands. Remember that hives full of honey are very heavy. Stands must be strong. Live fences don’t rot and they provide flowers too.

Dos and Don’ts

The stands must be strong and firm on the ground. Keep animals away from hives. Never tether animals near hives, as they cannot run away. It is your job to teach children to respect bees and to take care. If possible, fence the apiary to avoid intrusion.

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Local hives can be made from materials like papyrus reeds, bamboo, logs, bark, climbers, sticks and clay.

Hives can be made from materials which are locally available and in plentiful supply.

Cow dung is applied on the hives to protect them from pests and predators. They are dried in the sun after.

There are many ways of making local hives in Uganda.

The hives are protected from rain and wind using polythene wrap or iron sheets.

Shade made of banana leaves can also be used to avoid direct heat from the sun.
**DOs and DON’Ts**

- **Fire destroys. Always extinguish your smoker completely before leaving the apiary.**
- **Tell people to keep away from the apiary during the harvest, to avoid passersby from getting stung.**
- **Use buckets with airtight lids, avoid leaving the buckets uncovered.**
- **Ensure the smoker is fully lit in order to emit enough smoke before approaching the apiary.**
- **Be gentle while harvesting. Approach the apiary in a calm manner from either the back or from the sides of the hives.**

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**1. Clean the buckets and check that they have fitting lids.**

**2. You can tell by the weight of the hive when there is honey inside.**

**3. To light the smoker, you need fuel and a source of fire.**

**4. It is best to harvest in the day so that you can see what you are doing.**

**5. Sort honey: first grade honey is fully sealed with no brood or pollen; second grade honey should be put in a separate bucket.**
**PROCESSING HONEY**

1. Store honey in a clean, dry and cool environment.

2. Clean containers and other equipment well and check that they have airtight lids.

3. Crush the honeycomb into smaller pieces using a wooden ladle.

4. Honey can be separated from the wax comb using simple equipment.

5. Honey can be sold as whole honeycomb, in chunks of comb or as a liquid.

6. After the honey has been drained from the honeycomb the beeswax remains. This is a valuable product.

**DOs and DON’Ts**

- Good hygiene is important during honey processing.
- Plastic containers should be used for honey processing. Avoid metallic materials like saucepans.
- Use buckets with air-tight lids for good storage of the honey.

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Beeswax is a product from the combs that can be sold for cash.

1. First, wash the combs to remove any leftover honey.
2. Melt the clean wax in a pan of hot water. Do not heat the beeswax directly without water, or it will burn.
3. Keep stirring the mixture until it's molten.
4. Pour through a heavy cloth and squeeze with wooden sticks.
5. Leave to cool. The solid wax will come on top while the water remains at the bottom of the pan.
6. Drain any impurities to ensure you have clean wax and let it cool.
7. Beeswax should always be heated in water because it will burn if heated directly.
8. After processing, you end up with blocks of wax which can be sold.
9. Beeswax can be melted and mixed with good quality oil to make cosmetics. Candles and shoe polish can also be made using beeswax.

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