

Beekeeping in Romania Present and future

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From the earliest times in this region, beekeeping has been and remains a noble profession that has continuously developed both in terms of the number of bee colonies, production and quality.

Organization and cooperation of all beekeeping forces in the meaning of modernization of all beekeeping technologies, rational use of honey resources, increasing the professional level, etc., became a “must do”. Thus, at the initiative of people who loved bees and beekeeping in 1958 Beekeepers Association of Romania (A.C.A.R.), was founded. It as a professional, non-governmental, autonomous and apolitical organization of beekeepers.

The Beekeepers Association of Romania (A.C.A.R.) has been and is still the largest beekeeping association from Romania and one beekeeping association that had and has a structure with nationwide coverage with professional organizational forms – county branches, and economic units SC Apicola SRL located in all counties capital cities, that have storage spaces, commercial shops, etc.

Since its founding A.C.A.R. was concerned with the technical-organizational and legal framework necessary to develop this sector in good conditions, facilitating the development of professional and amateur beekeeping nationwide.

As a result of all these taken actions, in the period immediately following the establishment, ACAR (Beekeepers’ Association from Romania) has experienced a rapid and remarkable growth. The personality that has dedicated his life to this association, for Romanian beekeeping development was Professor Veceslav Harnaj (1917-1988), whose leader was for 25 years (1957-1982).

ACAR was and is being continue development as a single integrated system of education, research, production and capitalize by setting the Complex Bee (1965), Institute for Beekeeping Research and Production (1974), International Institute of Economics and Technology of Beekeeping Apimondia (1971), Beekeeping Highschool (1971), a monthly magazine Romania Apicola (1957), the county bee circles, not least through its subsidiaries county bee stores coming to support beekeepers by providing materials needed to practice the profession but also by buying bee products from them.

CURRENT STRUCTURE:

The current structure of the Beekeepers Association of Romania includes:

- 40 subsidiaries county;
- 40 economic units SC APICOLA LLC;
- The Beekeeping Research and Development Institute SA
- Beekeeping Complex Veceslav Harnaj SA
- Albina Publishing House which edits specialized books and “Romania Apicola” journal.

Beekeeping Complex Veceslav Harnaj SA - Activities:

- Romanian honey collection, processing and export.
- Production of:
 - Supplements for bees;
 - Hives, beekeeping equipment and tools;
 - Supplements for human use based on honey, wax, royal jelly and pollen;
 - Cosmetics based on bee products;
 - Honey and apple vinegar.

The Beekeeping Research and Development Institute SA

- Research:
 - Genetics of bees, beekeeping technologies;
 - Honey resources;
 - Chemistry of bee products;
 - Bee Pathology;
 - Apitherapy.
- Selection and breeding of queens
- Laboratory services analysis for honey and other bee products.
- Production of apitherapy
- Medicines for bees
- Extension Activities

The main objectives of the Beekeepers ‘Association of Romania are:

- Provides the structure, and by the activities performed the conditions meant to fulfill the purposes specified in the statute and the aspirations of its members in the practice of beekeeping;
- Proposes and promotes regulations or legislation norms drafts related to beekeeping practice and beekeepers interest, and intervenes at the level of central agencies and county, public, autonomous, companies and economic agents for solving the problems that appear;
- Organizes and facilitates exploitation by its members, in a market economy, of apicultural products obtained by them;
- Acts for raising the professional knowledge of its members by organizing lectures, demonstrations, exchanges, exhibitions, museums bee, conferences and consulting beekeeping. Supports beekeepers members of the Association to participate in such national and international events, editing and selling books, magazines and other propaganda materials and technical documentation related to beekeeping;
- Always acts in order to obtain facilities for beekeeping, asking for the support of central and local bodies of state administration and other units with responsibilities in this area;

- Participates in the organization of migratory beekeeping, to encourage a higher recovery of honey resources, bee pollination of crops and collaborates with ministries and local bodies of state administration to ensure proper activity of the Central Commission and county commissions for increase honey production and activity of migratory beekeeping ;
- Develops regulations, in order to organize voluntary joint committees of veterinarians and professional beekeepers meant to detect contagious bee diseases;
- Intervene with the authorities to prevent bee poisoning related to phyto-sanitary treatments, improvement of the legislation and initiate actions to reduce harmful effects on bees and environment, caused by the chemicals used in agriculture;
- organizes and offers technical specialized assistance to its members to help them acquire European funds (National Beekeeping Program, National Program for Rural Development etc.)
- Initiates and participates in international cooperation in the field of beekeeping in order to develop relationships with beekeeping associations and organizations from other countries, and with the International Federation of Beekeeping Associations – APIMONDIA;
- Together with the regional branches, supports and coordinates beekeepers, who are registered in the program of accreditation and certification of organic honey and other bee products;
- Promotes domestic consumption of honey and bee products (organizing and participating in trade fairs, exhibitions, seminars, conferences and roundtables, edit advertising - <http://www.aca.org.ro/evenimente/campania-mierea-romaneasca.html>);

After 1989, Romanian beekeeping had to face a dramatic decrease of the number of bee colonies, from 1,450,000 in 1989 to 600,000 in 2000. With the support of Beekeepers Association of Romania and the funding policies of MARD, now the number of hives reached the level from the 90's.

The honey production also increased, Romania constantly producing more than 20,000 tons of honey of well-known and internationally recognized quality.

Romanian apiculture problems that we are facing today are those worldwide encountered: pesticides, climate change, GMOs, reducing the forest habitat that provides honey flows, the age of the beekeepers, lack of funds for research, etc.

Optimism is a characteristic of the beekeepers, and we all believe that preserving our union, professionalism, and being aware of the contribution of the honeybees in preserving biodiversity, we can say that the bee still has a lot to show and the beekeepers still a lot to accomplish.