

Community Perceptions on Honey Quality in Tobacco Growing Areas in Kigoma Region, Tanzania

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Abstract : Beekeeping plays major role in improving biodiversity, increasing household income, and crop production through pollination. Tobacco farming is also the main source of household income for smallholder farmers. In Kigoma, production of Tobacco has increased and is perceived to threaten honey quality. The study explored the perception of the community on quality of honey in tobacco and non tobacco growing areas. The study was conducted in Kigoma Region, Tanzania. District and Villages were purposively sampled based on large numbers of people dealing with beekeeping activities and tobacco farming. Socioeconomic data were collected and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and content analysis. The perception of stakeholders on honey quality was analysed using Likert scale. Majority of the respondents agreed that tobacco farming greatly affects honey quality because honey from beehives near tobacco farms test bitter and sometimes irritating, which was associated with nicotine content and agrochemicals applied to tobacco crops. Though they cannot differentiate honey bitterness from agrochemicals and bee fodders. Furthermore, it was revealed that chemicals applied to tobacco and vegetables have negative effect on the bees and honey quality. Respondents believe that setting bee hives near tobacco farms might contaminate honey and therefore affect its quality. Beekeepers are not aware of the nicotine content from other bee fodders like miombo of which do not have any effect on human beings. Actually, tobacco farming does not affect beekeeping activities in issue of quality when farmers follow proper management of tobacco flowers and proper handling of honey. Though, big challenge in tobacco farming is chemically applied to the crops and harvest bee fodders for curing tobacco. The study recommends training to community on proper management of tobacco and proper handling of bee products.

Keywords : community, honey, perceptions, tobacco

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