

NEWS FROM KENYA

World Bee Day Celebrations



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Joseph Gitonga sent us this report:

Background:

On December 20, 2017, the United Nations UN General Assembly, adopted by consensus a resolution declaring May 20 as 'The World Bees Day'. The adoption was done in Washington DC.

In this light, the Apiculture Platform of Kenya spearheaded this celebration which was held in West Pokot County. The planning and execution of this celebration was jointly done by APK, the Department of Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation as well as the County Government of West Pokot. West Pokot is among the country's major honey producing counties and beekeeping is among its main economic pillars.

There were three main events of activity, whose climax was marked on Sunday, May 20, to coincide with the World Bees day.

Day 1 – May 18, 2018

The team visited Kitalakapel Honey Refinery where they had a discussion with the management and members of the cooperative. This was before they visited Kodich Beekeepers Cooperative with the same mission.



APK members at Cakesi Honey refinery



Later, the team proceeded to Chepareria and the National Museums of Kenya for site seeing.

APK Members outside Kitalakapel Honey Refinery

Day 2 – May 19, 2018

Stakeholders in the Apiculture sector gathered at the Makutano Stadium. They included bee keepers, honey processors, equipment sellers, processors of bee products among others. The activities of this day were officially opened by the West Pokot CEC member in charge of trade Augustine Lotondo.



APK Secretary Dr Wanja (left) displays some of the products of pollination

The attendants had a chance to tour exhibition tents through which various players in the apiculture sector showcased their products and services. The exhibitors included APK, Beecare Apiaries International, National Beekeeping Institute, Equity Bank, The Hive and Cabesi Honey Processors, among others.



A beekeeper admires a candle at the National Beekeeping Institute exhibition stand

Besides, attendants gathered for various presentations which touched on numerous topics in beekeeping sector and were spearheaded by APK experts.



One of the training sessions at Makutano Stadium, Kapenguria

Among the speakers of the day were APK Chairman Stephen Kagio, APK Secretary Dr Wanja Kinuthia, Ass Director of Livestock Robin Mbae, Director of Beekeeping Institute Dr Grace Asiko among others.

Day 3 – May 20, 2018

This was the climax of the three days in marking World Bees Day.

The day started with a procession around Kapenguria town, starting from Cabesi, walking around the town and to the stadium. But it was not just a usual walk, it was also a time to dance and celebrate bees, and the sweetness, health and economic aspects of honey.



A procession to mark World Bees Day in Kapenguria

After the procession, the stakeholders gathered at Makutano Stadium, eagerly waiting for the Chief Guest, Livestock PS, Harry Kimtai.

They all braved heavy rains that pounded in the area, causing a little delay of the afternoon activities.

The Chief Guest was accompanied by among other dignitaries, APK Chairman Stephen Kagio, County Secretary Dr Mike Parklea, various CECs, various Chief Officers among other top officials.

While officially closing the World Bees Day, the PS announced various measures that the government, jointly with the private sector, are doing to scale up the apiculture industry in Kenya.

Among these measures is that the Apiculture Development Policy is expedited and facilitated through the remaining process.

Besides, the Directorate of Livestock Production is in the process of developing the National Bee Industry Regulation.

Additionally, the development of a national Honey Residue Monitoring Plan to enhance traceability and compliance to the EU market is ongoing.



Livestock PS Harry Kimtai tours The Hive stand

Sponsors

APK is grateful to Equity Bank, County Government of West Pokot and Department of Livestock for sponsoring the activities of the 'World Bees Day'

About APK

APK was established in August 2016 and registered as a society in 2017. The goal of the Platform is to enhance the contribution of honey bees to food and nutritional security as well as improved livelihoods for social economic development.

The overall objective of APK is to develop apiculture (the science and art of beekeeping) for food security through pollination, enterprise promotion, and environmental conservation. Specifically, the Platform will focus on promoting;

- ✓ A vibrant and sustainable apiculture industry in Kenya for improved livelihoods
- ✓ Use of honeybees for pollination services as an input for agricultural transformation and environmental conservation
- ✓ Collaboration and partnership within the bee value chain
- ✓ Bee health, quality standards and good practices in the apiculture sector
- ✓ Apicultural innovations and appropriate technologies and
- ✓ Creating consumer awareness and capacity building on honey and other hive products

Membership

Membership is open to any person over the age of 18 who wishes to further the interests of the Platform. These include students, beekeepers, honey packers and traders, researchers, bee equipment manufacturers, and corporate bodies. There are various categories of membership as follows:

Individual Member: Any person who is over the age of 18

Institutional Member: Any institution carrying out apiculture and related activities and who are interested in promoting the Platform e.g. NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, government institutions, schools etc.

Honorary/Associate Member: Persons other than individual members who are interested in promoting the Platform, but who do not wish to participate in the daily activities of the Platform.

Membership Fees/ subscriptions

- a) Individual membership: kshs 2000 non-refundable registration fee and kshs 1000 annual subscription
- b) Institutional membership: kshs 10,000 non-refundable registration fee and kshs 2000 annual subscription
- c) Corporate member kshs 20,000 non refundable registration fee and kshs 5,000 annual subscription

Service to be offered by APK

- † Establishing a database and an effective network with its members.
- † Establishing linkages with other stakeholders.
- † Providing guidelines and advice for the bee industry on issues such as appropriate technology, bee health, quality control, processing, packaging and marketing.
- † Promoting bee farming industry in Kenya as a viable commercial and environment friendly venture.
- † Capacity building.
- † Lobby for development of favourable policies in the apiculture industry.
- † Spearhead collaboration with research institutions
- † Staging events to popularize honey products e.g. honey shows.
- † Information dissemination
- † Develop market networks for bee products