

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE POLLINATION SERVICES PROVIDERS APIARIAN EXPLOITATIONS

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The pollination of entomophilous plants represents a production factor which determines an important increase in production, its quality, profit and the rentability of entomophilous cultures. The aim of this paper is to realize the socio-economic profile of the pollination services providers' apiarian exploitations taking into consideration beekeepers particularities, the herd size of the bees' families, the maintenance system adopted and the economic performances. Following the socio-economic field research, it has been determined that the beekeepers – pollination services providers have an average age of 48 years, an experience of 16 years, have a herd of 59 bees families and register a profit rate of 22%.

Key words: apiculture, pollination, profit, apiarian technology

Realizing the socio-economic profile of the pollination services providers apiarian exploitations presumes reaching the following objectives:

- determining the social traits of beekeepers;
- determining the dimension of the bee families flock;
- identifying the adopted maintenance system;
- quantifying the economic performances.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The research methods utilized in the study have been structured according to the steps taken, from the preparation of the plan for the analysis to the formation of the conclusions and the elaboration of the proposed solutions for this activity area.

In making assumptions, were taken into account the credibility of the information sources that have been accessed. For this purpose, data bases in our country have been consulted (ex: The National Statistics Institute) and the ones available on international level (F.A.O.S.T.A.T. and E.U.R.O.S.T.A.T.).

The detailed information regarding the technical-economic results of beekeepers, the utilized techniques, the utilized capital, the commercialization methods applied etc. have been obtained through sociologic field research methods and techniques. From these, the one considered to be the most efficient for this study was the sociologic interview technique.

Choosing the area that was taken into consideration for this research thesis is based on the necessity to determine the development stage and the apiculture rentability depending on the terrain in which it is conducted, being listed all forms. [3]

It was necessary sampling the apiaries by size groups of the bee families herd as follows:

- 0-50 families;
- 50-100 families;
- Over 100 bee families.

The dimension of the sample was of 121 apiarian exploitation from 21 counties distributed evenly after the volume of the melliferous source and the bee families' herd.

This sampling has been realized according to the quota process that presumes crossing two stages, the first consisting in building a reduced model of the targeted population in the research, and the second consisting in the establishment of subjects' quota for each operator. The model is defined by the apiaries size and by the average in each group.

The interviewing was realized in three consecutive years 2007, 2008, 2009 in the first trimester of each year so that data in the previous year could be obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The social traits of the beekeepers pollination services providers

For the pollination services providing apiarian exploitations, the age of the beekeepers is determined both for the diversification of the exploitation production decision as for the coverage of the specialized work force necessary. By the size of the exploitation, it can be observed an increase of the age in accordance with the increase in the size of the bee families' herd. (*fig. 1*)

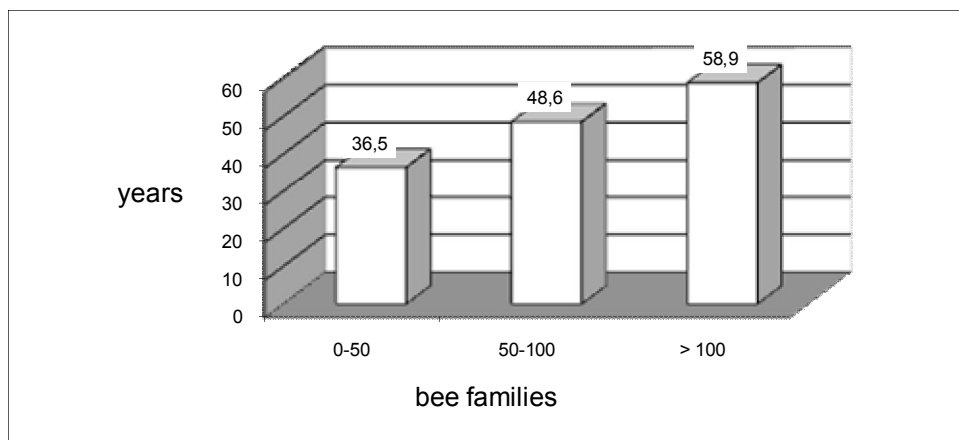


Figure 1 The beekeepers age according to the apiaries size

This phenomenon is due to the fact that young beekeepers don't own big exploitations for which it is necessary an apiarian technology knowledge and, first, because the age structure of the beekeepers in general is dominated by persons over 60 years. Many of these have started the exploitations or developed them after retirement. [1, 5]

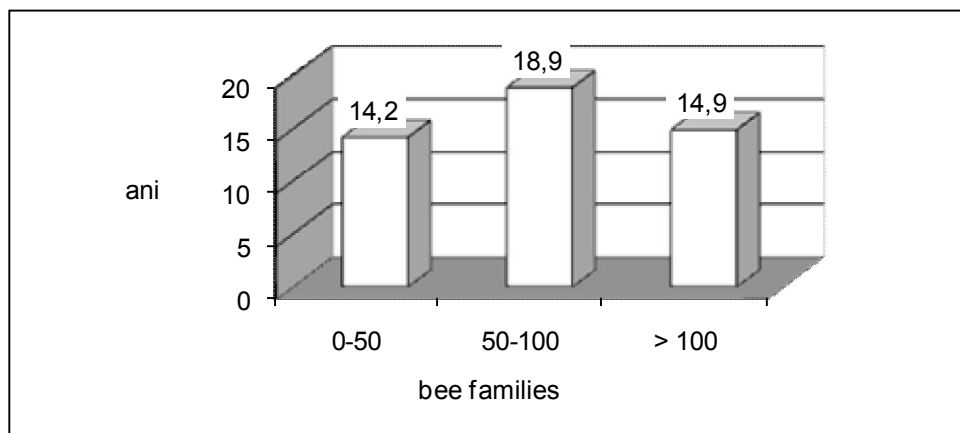


Figure 2 The professional experience of the beekeepers according to the apiaries size

Instead, the personal experience situation is different, in the way that beekeepers that own exploitation with a herd between 50 and 100 bee families register a higher level than the other two categories due to the fact that this hold a bigger mobility than the beekeepers in the superior size category with an average age of 58, 9 year and a bigger availability for production diversification. (fig. 2)

The bee families herd of the pollination services farms

The decision of providing pollination services is influenced by the exploitation size also because, through practicing this activity, the unqualified work force consumption is reduced at honey harvesting [2]. Some of the periods in which the pollination is realized overlap the periods in which important harvests are realized such as the ones of linden and acacia.

Also, there are being reduced some costs regarding the distribution and commercialization of honey, and the payment arrangements are more convenient than in the case of honey commercialization.

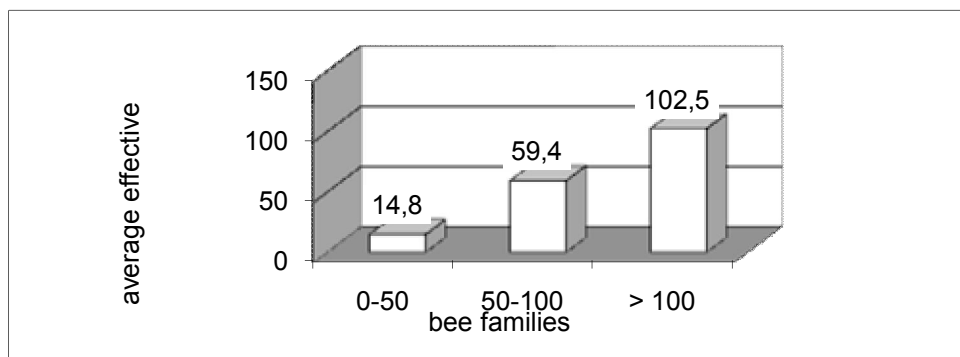


Figure 3 The bee families' herd of the pollination services providers farms

The maintenance system adopted in the pollination services provider farms

After the correlation analysis between the maintenance system and the pollination decision, it can be observed a preference of the exploitations that have adopted the stationary system that the other categories although they often lack in apiarian inventory that could allow the bee families transport in safety conditions. (fig. 4)

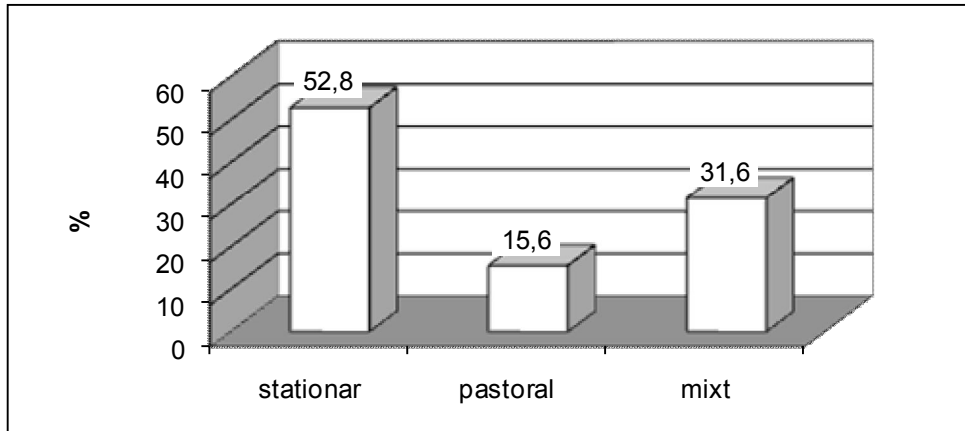


Figure 4. The maintenance system adopted in the pollination services provider farms

This phenomenon is due to the fact that beekeepers which realize exclusively pastoral perceive the apiarian production as being more advantageous than services due to income volume even if the profit or profit rate are lower.

The economic performances registered in the pollination services provider farms

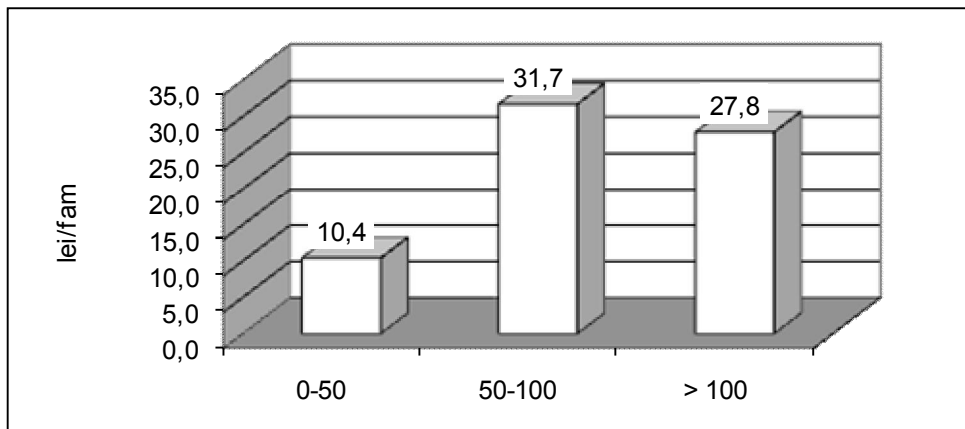


Figure 5. The raw profit obtained in the pollination services provider farms

Regardless of the size or the maintenance system of the apiarian exploitation, the profit represent the primary objective of beekeepers because this is the only that generate welfare.

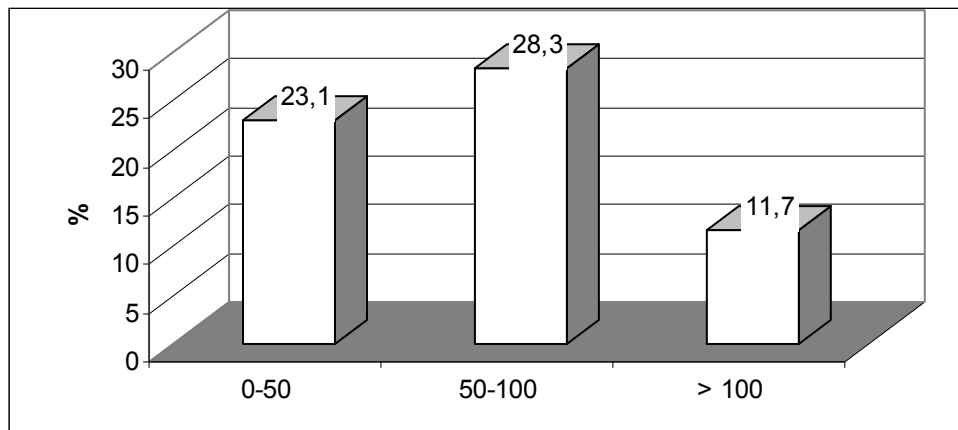


Figure 6. **The profit rate specific to pollination services provider farms**

From the realized field research, it has been observed that the average profit volume is higher in the case of average size exploitations. The registered exploitations are explained through the resources allocation capacity which, in the case of big exploitations, is smaller and, on the other hand, the reduced utilization possibilities of economic resources. It must be noticed the fact that small exploitations are being managed by persons who partially work in this activity and are less specialized. [4]

The profit rate has a different distribution to the profit volume in the sense that this registers more reduced differences according to the exploitation size, but the superior level of rentability is being kept for the average size exploitations.

CONCLUSIONS

The socio-economic research have highlighted the fact the beekeepers pollination services providers have an average age of 48 years, a professional experience of 16 years, hold a 59 bee families herd and register an average profit rate of 22%.

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