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## **Marketing of honey in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala**

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#### **Abstract**

The study entitled “Marketing of honey in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala” was conducted in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala in the Agriculture year 2021-22. The study was carried out to analyze the marketing of honey. Honey is a natural substance produced by honey bee from nectars of plants, which is having a lot of health benefits. Honey has great demand in Kerala, especially during covid 19 as people got more aware about its health benefits and people came to the beekeepers to buy honey. Even though India’s honey market is unorganized it ranks 8<sup>th</sup> rank in honey production in the world. Most of the bee keepers in the study area were dependent on society/processors to dispose the honey. The average marketing cost incurred by the beekeepers was Rs. 27.99 per kg, and price spread in channel II was Rs.105 per kg and in channel I it was Rs. zero per kg. The producers share in consumers rupee was 100 per cent in channel I and 73.75 per cent. There is a great demand for honey produced by Indian bee in international, there is a great export potential of honey and if beekeepers get engaged in exporting which will bring a structural transformation in marketing of honey.

**Keywords:** Apiary, beekeepers, price spread, producers share in consumer rupees, marketing cost

#### **Introduction**

Beekeeping is one of the simplest subsidiary enterprises for farmer to reinforce farm income through fewer efforts. In fact, the successful beekeeper acquired lot of skills in handling bees and understanding behavior and needs of hive (Kumar *et al.* 2020) [4]. In India, the climate is favourable and presence of enormous flower source is attracting beekeeping as a potential enterprise. India is in positive direction in production and lots of supporting programmes on skill development and financial help was given to farmers to enhance honey production in India. Beekeeping is an art and a science and those programmes was certainly brought change in honey production. When it comes to marketing, India doesn’t have any organized market even government and research institutes hadn’t come up with any marketing support through establishing procurement centers. Honey market was highly unorganized and having high price range across different places. This study attempted to reveal clear picture of marketing decisions of beekeepers, various stakeholders participating in marketing of honey and their impact and opportunities honey marketing in India.

#### **Research Methodology**

Ex post facto study or after-the-fact research design was used for the study as it describes the characteristics that are being studied. The present study was conducted in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala in the year 2022. Multistage randomized sampling has been used for the selection of Konni block from 8 blocks because it has large area of rubber and coconut orchard, its favorable climatic condition and hilly region makes it more suitable for bee keeping and high production of honey, and moreover it was easily accessible to researcher to visit the block. Out of total villages 4 villages were selected randomly i.e., Mylapra, Konni, Aruvappulam, Pramadam, and Malayalapurza. 60 respondents were selected randomly and categorization of beekeepers was based on the number of beehives as small, medium and large apiary, which had 30 small beekeepers, 23 medium beekeepers and 7 large beekeepers. The primary data for the study was collected from respondents using pre structured interview schedules were widely used.

#### **Analytical Tools**

For the presentation of the results and to analyze the data suitable tabular and functional analysis were applied.

**Disposal Pattern**

To examine the marketing pattern of honey at different categories of farms, simple analysis was done. To estimate the marketable surplus of produce, total quantity used for different purposes is deducted from total production of honey.

**Marketing Cost**

The total cost on marketing incurred in cash or kind by the producer and various intermediaries involved in the sale and purchase of the commodity till it reaches the ultimate consumer is computed by Equation (1):

$$C = C_f + C_{m1} + C_{m2} + C_{m3} + C_{m4} + \dots + C_{mn} \dots (1)$$

where,

C is the total cost of marketing of the commodity;  
 C<sub>f</sub> is the cost paid by the producer from time the produce leaves the farm till it is sold;  
 C<sub>m1</sub>, C<sub>m2</sub>, ..., C<sub>mn</sub>, denotes the cost incurred by different middleman in the process of buying and selling the product; and n is the number of middlemen involved in marketing.

**Price spread (PS)**

Price spread is the difference between the price paid by the consumer and the price received by the producer for an equivalent quantity of farm produce.

$$PS = P_1 - P_2$$

Where,

P<sub>1</sub>=Price at one level or stage in the market.

P<sub>2</sub> =Price at another level.

**Marketing margin**

This is the difference between the total payments (cost + purchase price) and receipts (sale price) of the middle men (Ith agency).

**Producers share in Consumers price**

It is the price received by the farmer expressed as a percentage of the retail price (i.e. the price paid by the consumer). If P<sub>r</sub> is the retail price, the producer's share in consumer's rupee (P<sub>s</sub>) may be expressed as follows:

$$P_s = (P_f / P_r) \times 100$$

Where, P<sub>f</sub> is the price received by the farmer per unit.

**Results and Discussion**

**Marketed and marketable surplus**

**Table 1:** Production, consumption and marketable surplus of honey (per hive)

Sl. No	Particulars	Small (less than 100 bee colonies)	Medium (100-200)	Large (200 and above)	Average
1	Total production (P)/hive (kg)	6.51 (100)	7.92 (100)	9.55 (100)	7.99 (100)
2	Home consumption (C)/hive (kg)	0.32 (4.92)	0.24 (3.04)	0.12 (1.26)	0.22 (2.76)
3	Marketable surplus (P-C)/hive (kg)	6.19 (95.08)	7.68 (96.96)	9.43 (98.74)	7.77 (97.24)

(Figures in the parentheses indicates percentages.)

Marketable surplus is the quantity of the produce left out after meeting the farmer's consumption and utilization requirements for kind payment and other obligations such as gifts, donations, charity, etc. Thus, marketable surplus shows the quantity left out for sale in the market. The marketed surplus shows the quantity actually sold after accounting for losses and retention by the farmers, if any and adding the previous stock left out for sale. The importance of marketed and marketable surplus has greatly increased owing to the recent changes in agricultural technology as well as social patterns. Production, consumption and marketing/ marketed surplus of honey has been presented in Table 1

Table 1 revealed that on an average out of total production of 7.99 kg honey per hive, 97.24 per cent was marketable surplus and only 2.76 per cent i.e., 0.22 kg was used for home consumption. Marketable surplus increased with increase in number of bee colonies i.e., it was 95.08 per cent for small beekeepers, 96.96 per cent for medium beekeepers and for large beekeepers it was 98.74 per cent. Quantity of honey for home consumption decreased as the size of apiary increased

i.e., 0.32 kg, 0.24 kg and 0.12 kg for small, medium and large beekeepers and its share decreased as the size of apiary increased i.e., it was 4.92 per cent in case of small beekeepers, 3.04 per cent in case of medium beekeepers and 1.26 per cent in case of large beekeepers.

**Marketing channels involved in honey marketing**

The study of marketing channels provides a systematic knowledge of the flow of goods and services from their origin (producer) to their final destination (consumer). An attempt was made to identify the various marketing channels through which marketing of honey took place in the study area. Two marketing channels were identified through which marketing of honey took place in the study area. They were

**Channel I:** Producer -Consumer

**Channel II:** Producer - Processor – Retailer – Consumer

**Disposal pattern of honey**

**Table 2:** Disposal pattern of honey through different marketing channels (per hive)

Channel	Small (less than 100 bee colonies)		Medium (100-200)		Large (200 and above)		Overall	
	No. of beekeepers	Quantity (kg)	No. of beekeepers	Quantity (kg)	No. of beekeepers	Quantity (kg)	No. of beekeepers	Quantity (kg)
I	24 (80)	4.66 (75.22)	8 (34.78)	3.36 (42.55)	3 (42.86)	2.60 (27.25)	35 (58.44)	3.59 (46.33)
II	6 (20)	1.53 (24.77)	15 (65.22)	4.55 (57.44)	4 (57.14)	6.95 (72.74)	25 (41.66)	4.18 (53.66)
Total	30 (100)	6.19 (100)	23 (100)	7.91 (100)	7 (100)	9.55 (100)	60 (100)	7.77 (100)

(Figures in the parentheses indicates percentages.)

In Table 2 it is observable that the small beekeepers dispose their produce through channel I (80 per cent) and 20 per cent through channel II. The quantity sold by small beekeepers

through channel I is 4.66 kg and through channel II 1.53 kg from per hive. In case of medium and large beekeepers sell their 42.55 per cent (3.36 kg from per hive) and 27.25 per

cent (2.60 kg from per hive) produce through channel I and through channel II 57.44 per cent (4.55 kg) and large beekeepers sell 6.95 kg (72.74 per cent). The majority of honey of large beekeepers is disposed through channel II. Small farmers prefer channel I because they can easily sell the honey nearby.

It may be further observed that channel I (Producer-Consumer) was the most common marketing channel for marketing of honey in the study area was as majority (53.66 per cent) of the beekeepers followed this channel for disposal of honey. The per hive marketable quantity of honey was 7.77 kg. Though the proportion of beekeepers opting for this channel for marketing of their produce (honey) was larger but the quantity of honey marketed through this channel was lower because most of the beekeepers (24 out of 30 i.e., 80.00 per cent) who adopted this channel, were small beekeepers owning smaller number of colonies and consequently producing less amount of honey. Medium keepers adopted channel II more (57.44 per cent) but in case of large beekeepers 27.25 per cent sold the honey through channel I this is mainly because they pack, label and sell their honey directly in the market.

### Marketing cost

The marketing cost of honey included processing of honey, packaging of processed honey, labelling, transportation, storage cost and labour charges. Table 3 and 4 revealed that the marketing cost incurred for beekeepers varied with

marketing channel.

### Marketing Channel I

**Table 3:** Marketing cost of honey (per kg) in channel I

Sr. No.	Particulars	Rs/kg
1.	Producer selling price	350.00
2.	Marketing cost incurred by producer	
i.	Packaging	10 (22.28)
ii.	Processing	13.22 (29.45)
iii.	Labour charge	14.66 (32.65)
iv.	Miscellaneous	7 (15.59)
	Total cost	44.9 (100)
1.	Net price received by producer	305
2.	Consumer Price	350

(Figures in the parentheses indicates percentages.)

The data about marketing channel I of honey is presented in Table 2 In this channel the honey is directly sold to the consumer from the producer. The different marketing cost incurred for the producer in this channel is labour charge accounts for 32.65 per cent (Rs.14.66 per kg), processing cost 29.45 per cent (Rs.13.22 per kg), packaging cost 22.28 per cent (Rs. 10 per kg) and miscellaneous cost 15.59 per cent (Rs. 7 per kg). The total cost incurred by the producer is Rs. 44.90 per kg.

### Marketing Channel II

**Table 4:** Marketing cost and marketing margin of honey (per kg) in channel II

Sr. No.	Particulars	Rs/kg
1.	Producer selling price/ price paid by Processors	295
2.	Marketing cost incurred by producer	
i.	Labour	8.75 (79.55)
ii.	Miscellaneous	2.25 (20.45)
	Total(i+ii)	11 (100)
1.	Net price received by producer	284
2.	Marketing cost incurred by processors	
i.	Processing charge	7(19.44)
ii.	Labour	10.5 (29.16)
iii.	Packaging	10 (27.77)
Iv.	Labelling	1 (2.77)
v.	Storage	1.5 (4.16)
vi.	Transportation	4.5 (12.5)
vii.	Miscellaneous expenses	1.5 (4.16)
viii.	Total(i+vii)	36 (100)
ix.	Total expenses incurred by processor	331
1.	Commission charged by processor	29
2.	Price received by processor/ price paid by retailers	360
3.	Marketing cost incurred by retailers	
i.	Transportation	1.75 (43.75)
ii.	Miscellaneous expenses	2.25 (56.25)
iii.	Total (i+ii)	4 (100)
1.	Total expenses incurred by retailer	364
2.	Commission charged by retailer	36
3.	Price received by retailer/ price paid by consumer	400

(Figures in the parentheses indicates percentages.)

The data about marketing channel I of honey is presented in Table 3. In this channel the producers sell honey to processors/society at Rs 295/kg. Labor charges and miscellaneous cost where the only 2 marketing cost incurred by the producer which account for Rs. 8.75 per kg and Rs. 2.25 per kg of the total marketing cost of Rs 11 per kg. At the next level the processors/society sell the processed honey to the retailers in which the marketing cost incurred by the seller

are processing charge 19.44 per cent (Rs. 7 per kg), labor charge 27.77 per cent (Rs. 10.5 per kg), packaging 27.77 per cent (Rs. 10 per kg), labelling 2.77 per cent (Rs 1 per kg), storage 4.16 per cent (Rs. 1.5 per kg), transportation 12.5 per cent (Rs 4.5 per kg) and miscellaneous expenses 4.16 per cent (Rs 1.5 per kg). The total marketing cost incurred by the processors/society is Rs. 36 per kg. At the last level the processed honey is sold to the consumer through retail shops

at Rs. 400. In which the marketing cost incurred by retailer are transportation account for 43.75 per cent (Rs. 1.75 per kg) and miscellaneous expenses 56.25 per cent (Rs. 2.25 per kg).

### Marketing cost incurred at different level of marketing channel

**Table 5:** Marketing Cost at different level of marketing channel (per kg honey)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Channels (Rs.)	
		I	II
1.	Marketing cost incurred by producer	44.99 (100)	11 (21.56)
2.	Marketing cost incurred by processor	--	36 (70.58)
3.	Marketing cost incurred by retailer	-	4 (7.84)
4.	Total marketing cost	44.99(100)	51(100)

(Figures in the parentheses indicates percentages.)

It is clear from Table 5 that marketing cost was higher in channel II (Rs. 51) as compared to that in channel I (Rs. 44.99). Larger portion of marketing cost was incurred by processors 70.58 per cent). Marketing cost incurred by retailer was lower 7.84 per cent only. The marketing cost incurred by the producer in channel I was higher (Rs. 44.99) as they sold the honey directly to consumers. Whereas in channel II it was only 21.56 per cent.

### Price spread in marketing of honey in different channels

**Table 6:** The price spread in different marketing channels in marketing of honey (Rs/kg)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Channel I	Channel II
<b>Producer</b>			
1.	Price received	350	295
	Marketing cost	44.99	11
	Net price received	305	284
<b>Processors/Society</b>			
2.	Purchase Price	-	295
	Marketing cost	-	36
	Sale price	-	360
	Marketing margin	-	29
<b>Retailers</b>			
3.	Purchase Price	-	360
	Marketing cost	-	4
	Sale price	-	400
	Marketing margin	-	36
4.	Consumers price	350	400
5.	Price spread	0	105
6.	Producers share in consumers rupee	100 %	73.75%

The price spread is difference between the producers' selling price and consumer's purchase price. The price spread helps to calculate the producer's share in consumer's rupee. This indicates the share of price received by producer in consumer's purchase price. The price spread and producer's share in consumer's rupee was presented in Table 6

In channel I, the producer share in consumer rupee was 100 percent because in this channel the beekeeper sells honey directly to the consumer with their own rand and price. In this channel, most of the beekeeper sells honey at the rate of Rs. 350 per kg to consumers. The marketing cost incurred for beekeeper was 44.99 per kg and a net price realized was 305 per kg of honey.

In channel-II, the producer share in consumer rupee was 73.75 per cent. In this channel, the beekeeper sells honey to processors/society for the price of 295 per kg after meeting

marketing cost of 11 per kg of honey and a net price received for beekeeper was 284 per kg of honey. In the next level, the processor/ society processes the honey and sells to retailers at the price of 350 per kg after meeting the marketing cost of 36 and the marketing margin of 29 per kg of honey. Then finally to the consumers the honey is sold at 400 per kg of honey after meeting the marketing cost of 4 and marketing margin of 36 per kg of honey.

### Conclusion

The marketing of honey in the study area wasn't organized and there isn't any government procurement centers to support the marketing of honey. The only procuring center in the study area was society i.e., channel II, were the beekeepers dispose of the honey due to lack of storage facilities and sell at a lower price. In channel I were the beekeepers can fetch a better price the marketing cost incurred is Rs. 44.99 per kg and price spread was Rs. zero per kg. The beekeepers marketing cost was more in channel I than compared to channel II. Due to the FSSAI certification is needed to sell their produce in the market most of the beekeepers sell more quantity of honey through channel II the average honey sold through channel II was 4.18 kg per hive. The society had to spend more on marketing cost of Rs. 36 per kg due to its intensive labour cost, processing cost and packaging cost. Overall, most of the disposed honey through channel I i.e., 58.44 per cent and 41.66 per cent through channel II. The honey produced from rubber tree nectar is having unique taste and pleasant light aroma and is having a great potential for exporting, if the beekeepers get involved in exporting it will provide them a wide variety of market to dispose honey and can fetch better price.

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