



Bee Keeping

Introducing the East African Organic Products Standards



Organic beekeeping

It is a holistic approach to apiculture that prioritizes bee health, natural living conditions, and the avoidance of synthetic chemicals and unnatural interventions, following certification standards to produce honey and other products free from chemical residues



Beekeeping is an important activity that contributes to enhancement of the agriculture and forestry production through the pollinating action of bees.

General requirements

Location of the Beehive: EAOPS 8.2.2

- Place hives far from contamination at least 5 km away from chemical farms, industries, or highways and ensure bees collect nectar and pollen from organic or natural vegetation within 3km around the hives.



Feeding the bees: EAOPS 8.2.4

- At the end of the season, ensure each hive has enough honey and pollen reserves for the bees to sustain themselves.
- Where supplementary feeding is necessary, provide only organic honey or organic sugar syrup between harvests.

Converting to Organic bee keeping: EAOPS 8.2.5

- Bee colonies can be converted to organic production.
- New bees should come from organic sources when available.
- During conversion, replace old wax with organic wax, and honey can only be sold as organic after at least one full harvest cycle of organic management.



Bee Health and Pest Control: EAOPS 8.2.7

- Maintain hive health through good hygiene and regular hive management.
- Keep bees free from pests and diseases using natural and organic methods such as **organic acids, essential oils, steam, or flame** for cleaning.
- If synthetic medicines are used, the hive must be isolated and can only return to organic production after one year.
- Never destroy bees during harvesting always handle colonies gently to protect their welfare.
- Remove male brood only when necessary to control Varroa mites. Used engine oil **shall not be used** for pests control



- Mutilations, like clipping of the wings of queen bees, are prohibited.
- Artificial insemination of queen bees is permitted. Avoid chemical bee repellents.
- Keep honey below 45°C during extraction and processing to preserve its natural quality and nutrients.

In this brochure you can see some of the requirements of the East African Organic Products Standards. This standard was adopted by the East African Community in April 2007 and has been reviewed in 2018 and 2023. It thereby became an official standard for Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. This popular version has been developed by the Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM) through the AFPQ Project titled as Strengthening Regional Trade through Compliance to East African Organic Products Standards which is funded by GIZ through Biovision African Trust (BvAT). It has also been validated by the National Validation Committee for the Knowledge products established under the Knowledge Hub for OA/AE in East Africa (KHEA) Project.



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