



## Establishing new business models with NWFP

### Introduction

The project "sustainable bee forest" develops and implements a new forest management concept that improves the habitat of flower-pollinating insects during re- and afforestation from the very beginning while generating new sources of income from non-wood forest products. It is based in the state of Hesse in the middle of Germany, which is one of the most densely forested states in Germany. A quarter of the total forest area in Hesse is privately owned, and one third of this is small-scale private forest is owned by farmers. Because many of them are challenged with forest dieback in the face of climate change, the smallholder farmers are the main target group of the "sustainable bee forest" OG. By focusing on product innovation with NWFP, the OG aims at diversifying sources of income from forest management.

### Business model with NWFP from bee forest

In addition to wood production, emphasis is placed on the production of honey and other non-wood forest products incl. berries and nuts in bee-friendly forest habitats. The OG conducts monitoring and evaluation studies and collaborated with the University of Göttingen to analyse the economic potential of honey as a non-wood forest product. Such research has been lacking. Yet a solid knowledge base is needed for knowledge transfer and persuasion of interested forest owners, managers, and administrations. A Master Thesis at University of Göttingen (2024) conducted an economic analysis of the non-wood forest product innovation from managed forests with bee-friendly species. It modelled the economic potential in two different settings:

1. Early succession phase in first years of stand development.
2. Comparable areas in standing forests with corresponding succession and in old-growth forests.

The analysis examined the economic potential of honey, berries, and nuts: income per hectare in different succession phases, and the economic potential in a so-called "combined forest use model", incl. wood, honey, and nuts. The results of this research are made available via the OG website and communicated by various means and activities, incl. outreach to small-scale forest owners.

## Lessons learned

The marketing of monofloral (type) honey is economically interesting for professional beekeepers because it can be marketed nationwide at a high price. However, in order to produce such type honeys, large tracts of one flowering resource or tree species (monoculture) are required. This is in contradiction to the desired mixed forest of bee forest tree species. One solution could be to market a "bee forest honey" as an additional product alongside classic type honeys.

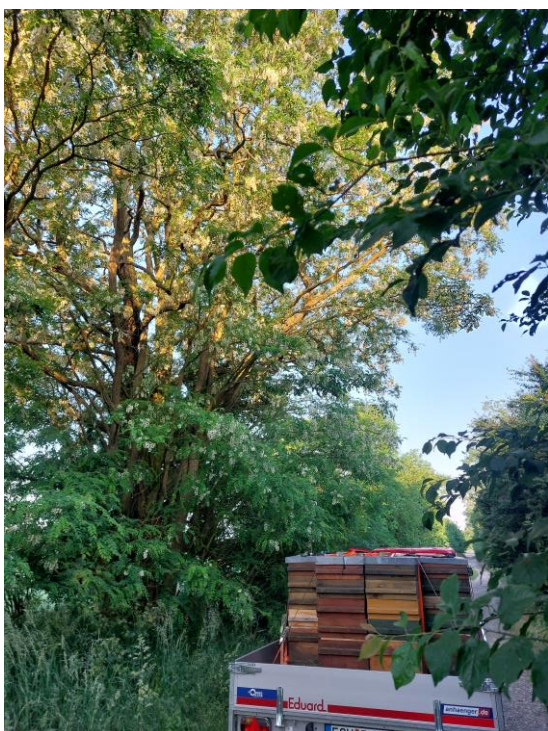


Figure 1: Honey from pollinating trees



Figure 2: Communication about NWFP from bee forest

The information presented in this factsheet was developed by the FOREST4EU partner, drawing on the innovations and knowledge generated by the indicated operational group with their explicit authorization.

### Further information

[www.bienenwald-hessen.de](http://www.bienenwald-hessen.de)



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