



National Agricultural Value Chain Development Project  
*Transitioning from Subsistence to Commercial Farming*



# MARKETING OF BEE PRODUCTS





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## **Introduction**

Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging goods and services that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Key players in the marketing chain include producers, traders processors, consumers, as well as other market intermediaries who undertake marketing functions like transportation and retailing. Marketing is more than just advertising and promotion – it’s all about connecting with the customer.

## **Agricultural marketing**

Agricultural marketing is a process that involves assembling, storage, processing, transportation, packaging, grading and distribution of different agricultural commodities across the country. Agricultural marketing is a key driver of agriculture commercialization. An efficient agricultural marketing system acts as a pull for stimulating production, value addition and consumption, there by accelerating the pace of agribusiness and economic development.



Plate 1. Honey ready for consumption



Plate 2. Bee wax and Propolis



## Marketing Strategy

A marketing strategy is a comprehensive, long-term plan aimed at achieving a company's goals by understanding customer needs and establishing a distinct and sustainable competitive advantage. It involves everything from identifying target customers to selecting appropriate channels for customer engagement. A marketing strategy comprises the following four essential steps:

- i **Market Segmentation:** This entails dividing the market into distinct buyer segments with varying needs, characteristics, or behaviors, potentially requiring tailored products or marketing approaches.

- ii **Market Targeting:** This step assesses the attractiveness of each market segment, selecting one or more segments to serve. It focuses on building strategic relationships with the right customers.
- iii **Market Differentiation:** Here, the goal is to create superior customer value by differentiating the market offering. Companies must distinguish their products, services, people, pricing, and timeframe to stand out from competitors in the target market.
- iv **Market Positioning:** This step seeks to influence customer perception relative to the competition, establishing a clear, unique, and advantageous position in the customer's mind. Companies need to highlight distinctions from competitors in their target market to emphasize the value customers seek.



### Marketing Mix

The marketing mix, also known as the 7 Ps, comprises tools used by companies to promote their products or services effectively. In essence, it aids businesses in delivering the right product at the right place, price, and time. The seven essential categories for successful

marketing are Product, Price, Promotion, People, Process, Place, and physical evidence.



*Figure 1. An Illustration of the 7 Ps of Marketing Mix*

**The 7 Ps of the marketing mix include:**

1. **Product:** Prioritize enhancing your product to meet customer needs, ensuring they understand its features, advantages, and benefits.
2. **Price:** Conduct thorough research to set a competitive price that covers costs and generates a profit, aligning with customer willingness to pay.
3. **Place:** Ensure your product is available where customers expect, considering factors like supermarkets, online platforms, and

logistics for optimal profitability.

4. **Promotion:** Utilize various channels like branding, advertising, social media, and influencers to communicate and attract potential customers effectively.
5. **People:** Create positive experiences for employees, customers, and stakeholders who interact with your business.
6. **Process:** Streamline every step of the customer journey, from inquiry to purchase, for a seamless experience.
7. **Physical evidence:** Establish a tangible presence through a physical store, website, and printed materials to reinforce your brand's existence.

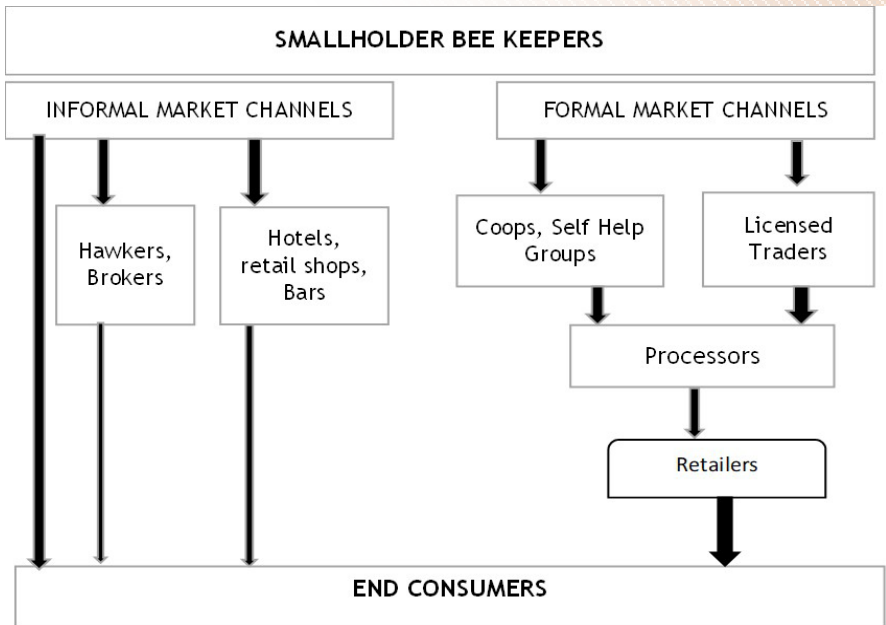
### Marketing channels

The pathways that agricultural/livestock products take to get from farmers to consumers are called marketing channels. Some of the channels in bee marketing include;

- The number of intermediaries involved will have a bearing on both producer and consumer bee prices.
- From the consumer point of view, the shorter the marketing chain, the more likely is the retail price going to be low and affordable.







### Market participation for producers



Plate 3: Packaged honey in a supermarket shelf

- Despite the high demand for bee products, most of the producers are not market oriented. Majority of smallholder farmers sell their products individually and this exposes them to exploitation by middlemen.

- They also lack bargaining power and transaction costs are high hence reducing the profit margins.
- One of the solutions is through collective marketing whereby farmers are organized into marketing organizations like farmer producer organizations (FPOs) and cooperatives
- Collective action through rural producer marketing organizations can be significant for improving smallholder welfare thus contributing to rural economic growth and poverty alleviation.
- Some of the benefits of collective marketing include:
  - Big bargaining power
  - Bulk storage to keep costs low
  - Accessing specific export markets •
  - Building relationships with domestic and international traders
  - Attaining big volumes required by the market.
  - Reduced transaction costs







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