The best of honey in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Basic information about the sector and key exporting companies 2013/2014
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Link for download: www.bosniafarma.ba/en/documents/honeycatalogue

FOSTERING AGRICULTURAL MARKETS ACTIVITY (FARMA)
Foreword

Dear reader and catalogue user,

This publication provides information about the premium, high-quality honey and the major honey producers from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). It is a starting point for any potential distributor or buyer to learn about the types of honey in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the major producers. In addition to poly-floral types of honey (Bosnian forest, Bosnian meadow or Herzegovina honey), BiH offers several mono-floral, specialty types of honey, such as chestnut, sage, heather/winter savory and acacia.

In addition to providing an overview of the honey sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the major types of honey produced here, this publication presents some of the country’s largest honey producers.

For any additional information, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Toric, Chief of Party,
USAID/Sida FARMA project, Bosnia and Herzegovina

For more information please visit: www.bosniafarma.ba
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has great potential for the production of natural honey due to its varied climate and landscapes. Bosnia, with its continental climate and mountainous terrain, enables the production of several high-value types of mono-floral (chestnut blossom, acacia), forest and meadow honey; Herzegovina, on the other hand, with its Mediterranean climate, is ideal for the production of other types of honey such as heather/winter savory, sage, Jerusalem thorn, Dalmatian laburnum and poly-floral honey derived from the nectar of many types of Mediterranean herbs. In addition to this diversity of climate, BiH honey production also benefits from low population density and large parts of the country without significant industry, enabling the production of premium, natural honey.

The honey produced in Bosnia and Herzegovina is special. It is enjoyed by young and old in everyday diet, given as a gift for special occasions and quite often used as natural medicine.

There are approximately 3,700 different plant species in Bosnia and Herzegovina, more than 700 of which are medicinal and aromatic plants. Diversity of climate and vegetation, clean environment, and our beekeeping tradition, provide excellent conditions for the production of high-quality honey. These specialty honeys are produced in small quantities, so BiH producers are targeting specialty niche markets.
**Types of honey produced in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Bosnian forest honey** is rich in minerals, with its distinct, dark color. It crystalizes quickly and has larger grains in honeycomb. It is taken in fruit beverages or cherry, peach, or black currant juices. It does not contain flower honey. Did you know: 53 percent of BiH is covered with forests?

**Honey from Herzegovina** reflects the Mediterranean flora available in the southern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The region is famous for the many types of mono-floral honey, but also for poly-floral honey sourced from a variety of medicinal plants. The taste can vary from season to season, depending on which plants are most represented. Honey from medicinal plants is often used to strengthen the immune system.

**Chestnut honey** is produced mostly in the Una-Sana region in north-western Bosnia, where the wild chestnut is found in abundance. This honey is yellowish-brown, has a strong scent and a slightly bitter taste. Analyses have shown that chestnut honey has one of the highest mineral contents of all honeys. It contains up to a hundred times more pollen grains than acacia honey. Pollen is rich with proteins, vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. It is recommended for use with chamomile, thyme, or rose hip tea, as well as in many recipes.

**Sage honey** is typical of the Herzegovina region, which has a Mediterranean climate and is rich in medicinal plants. Sage is known for its curative properties and even its botanical name (*Salvia officinalis*) comes from the word salvare – to save, to cure. Sage honey is very aromatic and is in high demand in BiH because of its positive effects on the respiratory, digestive and immune systems.

**Heather/Winter savory honey** is produced in southwestern BiH and is appreciated for its mild, distinct flavor. The honey can vary slightly from dark yellow to brownish, depending on the heather found by bees. Kids in Bosnia love heather honey, especially with chamomile or rose hip tea.

**Acacia honey** from Bosnia and Herzegovina is most suitable for production of comb honey. This honey is light yellow, almost transparent. It has a pleasant mild flavor and is appreciated by young and old alike.
About the USAID/Sida FARMA project

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Swedish Development Agency (Sida) are partners in the 5.5-year Fostering Agricultural Markets Activity (FARMA). The goal of the project is rapid, sustainable, and broad-based economic growth through demand-driven interventions aimed at improved competitiveness of BiH agricultural producers and agribusiness enterprises. The project’s purpose is to expand environmentally sustainable production, processing, and sales of value-added agricultural products.

USAID/Sida FARMA is active in the following fields: market linkages, access to finance, technical support and capacity building, and EU integrations and standards. Sectors covered by the project are dairy, fruit and vegetables, medicinal and aromatic plants (MAP), and honey.

Support in the honey sector includes technical assistance aimed at improving productivity, new product development, and marketing. Efforts are also made to support the exports of honey, given the recent approval by the European Union.
In the recent years, Apimed started with the production of certified organic honey in 200 beehives, with a plan to expand this segment of production.

The product range includes 8 types of honey, pollen, royal jelly and honey mix, bronchi-honey (syrup with honey and medicinal plants) and natural cosmetics based on honey and herbs. Honey types are meadow and forest honey (poly-floral), comb honey, chestnut, heather, sage, linden, and acacia.
Herzeg Med company is located in Trebinje, is south-eastern Herzegovina. This part of Bosnia and Herzegovina has always been famous for its honey production – in the late 19th century, honey from Trebinje region was sold in the Austro-Hungarian Empire: the records from the year 1900 show that 30 tons of honey were sold to Vienna.

The unique fragrance, taste, and colour of Herzegovina honey comes not only from its herbal origin, but also because this part of Herzegovina is one of the few remaining ecological regions in the Balkans.

This tradition of quality continues to the present day. Using modern technology, this honey is analyzed and controlled to comply with the highest quality standards. The many awards that Herzeg Med has won attest to the quality of their main product: Herzegovina honey based on nectar from many types of Mediterranean herbs. This honey is sold pure, as well as mixed with dried figs, raisins, walnuts, or almonds. We also offer Bosnian meadow and acacia honey.
The Medicom company was established back in 1988, as a result of a long family history in beekeeping, which dates back to 1952. The company is located in Grude in western Herzegovina. In addition to its own honey production, it also buys honey from beekeepers in the region. Medicom is the largest honey processor in BiH and implementation of the HACCP system is in its daily routine. Medicom offers 5 types of honey: sage, chestnut, heather, acacia and poly-floral honey. This honey has received numerous golden medals for quality, and consumers all over BiH enjoy Medicom honey. Medicom is currently looking for distributors in Western Europe.
Žalfija is a cooperative of beekeepers, based in Trebinje. More than 60 beekeepers from this region are gathered around this cooperative. Its name, Žalfija, stands for Sage (*Salvia officinalis*), a well-known medicinal plant. This type of honey is most commonly produced by the cooperative’s members.

Honey types vary year-to-year, but in most years, honeybees in this region produce sage, heather and winter savory (*Calluna vulgaris* and *Satureja montana*), Jerusalem thorn (*Paliurus spina-christi*), and Dalmatian Laburnum (*Petteria ramentacea*) mono-floral honey, as well as poly-floral honey.

The cooperative is also active in the production and trade of various materials for beekeepers, some of which have been exported to Italy, Norway, and Ireland. The cooperative is also implementing the HACCP system in the production of beekeeping materials.
We also recommend that you take a look at the Catalogue of BiH companies from the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants sector – learn about the sector and get information on 25 major exporters, including their contact details.

Link for download: www.bosniafarma.ba/en/documents/catalogue