

US Bought Over 70% of Brazilian Honey Exports in 2008

Contributed by Giovana Perfeito
Thursday, 22 January 2009

The year of 2008 ended with positive figures and record-high pricing for the Brazilian beekeeping industry despite having been full of challenges. The industry doubled the value of its exports, totaling US\$ 43.57 million.

Additionally, the volume of foreign shipments grew 42% (18,270 tons) in comparison with 2007, when sales totaled 12.900 tons, with revenues of US\$ 21.2 million.

The higher increase in export values, when compared with volumes, is due to the fact that the average price charged for Brazilian honey in 2008 (US\$ 2.83 per kilogram) was the highest in the history of Brazilian exports.

The figure surpassed the US\$ 1.64 per kilogram paid for the product in 2007, and broke the record attained in 2003, which was US\$ 2.36 per kilogram.

The figures were taken from the survey consolidated by the analyst at the Sebrae Agribusiness Unit and national coordinator at the Sustainable Integrated Beekeeping Network (Rede Apis), Reginaldo Resende.

The reference is the Internet-Based Foreign Trade Information Analysis System (Alice-Web), of the Foreign Trade Secretariat (Secex), under the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade.

The challenges faced last year include the end of the European embargo on Brazilian honey, which took place in March. As a consequence, the industry, which is the 11th largest global honey producer and ninth largest exporter, had to implement Good Practices and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) at depots and honey stores, in addition to meeting the register requirements with the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply.

Despite the economic crisis, the United States was the main destination for Brazilian exports in 2008. The country answered to 73.1% of total sales, with revenues of US\$ 31.84 million, considering a price of US\$ 2.32 per kilogram of honey.

To Germany, Brazil sold US\$ 7.188 million, i.e., 16.5% of exports, considering a price of US\$ 2.66 per kilogram, way above the overall average. The third largest buyer market for Brazilian honey was Canada, which answered to 5.3% of sales (US\$ 2.308 million), considering an average price of US\$ 2.57 per kilogram of honey.

São Paulo was the state that exported the most, totaling US\$ 13.3 million, answering alone to nearly one third (30.5%) of exports. Rio Grande do Sul ranked second (US\$ 8.69 million), with approximately one fifth of the export value (19.9%).

The ranking continues with Ceará in the third place (US\$ 6.74 million), Piauí (US\$ 4.41 million), Paraná (US\$ 3.8 million), Santa Catarina (US\$ 3.52 million) and Rio Grande do Norte (US\$ 2.11 million).

Other states were Minas Gerais (US\$ 667,130), Maranhão (US\$ 187,970), Pernambuco (US\$ 71,710) and Espírito Santo (US\$ 181,00). The best price was the one charged by the state of Ceará: US\$ 2.62 per kilogram.

Among the companies that exported to Europe, three are from Ceará, two from Santa Catarina, one from São Paulo and one from Paraná. However, only two companies from Santa Catarina answered to 71% of export value.

"It is worth noting that exports to the European Union would increase, if only there were more depots accredited with the Ministry of Agriculture for exporting honey to Europe, as that market purchased good quantities and paid better prices," says Reginaldo.

Sebrae