
Japan Approved. Now Brazil's Bioessens Wants Its Propolis in Other Countries

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
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Bioessens, a Brazilian propolis producer, has big international plans for its product for the coming year. Propolis or bee glue is the raw material bees use to build their communities. The resinous substance is extracted from flowers and barks of trees and is used as a cement to construct the beehive.

"Bioessens," says Daniel Ken Shimizu, administrative director of the company based in Cotia, in southeastern Brazil, "is greatly interested in introducing its products in countries and regions the company hasn't yet reached."

According to Shimizu, the main product currently exported by the company is raw green propolis and propolis in alcoholic extract, sold in bulk.

"We have been exporting to the Asian market for 14 years, mainly to Japan," he explained. Each month around 300 kilograms (660 lbs) are shipped through medium-term contracts, not counting sporadic orders, the so-called spot sales.

According to Shimizu, to match the rigorous quality standards of Japan, the factory is registered at the Federal Inspection Service at the Ministry of Agriculture (SIF/MA) under number 1399.

According to the director, the company currently has a capacity for production of two tons of bulk propolis a month, with no need for investment. With regard to the domestic market, monthly production is two tons of honey in fractioned products (bottles, pots and bags).

Established in 1994, Bioessens generates 11 direct jobs and is specialized in the supply of raw propolis and finished products to clients in the food, cosmetics, pharmaceutical and herbal medication sectors.

Bioessens has its own laboratory equipped to promote microbiological and physical-chemical analysis of products and to develop new products. The propolis is collected by trained beekeepers.

It is then rigorously selected little by little and stored in refrigerators at minus 18 degrees Celsius (-0.4 degrees Fahrenheit). Only then is the product packed in plastic bags in a modified atmosphere - using a combination of gases that avoid growth of fungi and preserve the quality and freshness of the product.

Each lot of propolis received is analyzed to check the quality. The microbiological analysis is promoted frequently to guarantee good quality of the products from the bee farms.

Apart from that, Bioessens works with a traceability system that guarantees all necessary information regarding the origin of the product. Therefore, the producer can trace suppliers, harvesting region, date and even climate conditions on the day of the collection.

The varieties of raw propolis made by Bioessens are harvested in wild areas to avoid contamination. The beehives, the producers guarantee, are kept far from crops to avoid bee contact with plantations that could be treated with pesticides.

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