

# Genetics for producing thousands of queen bees

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Mexico has launched its first Center for Queen Bee Breeding in the center-north state of Aguascalientes, which aims to support productivity for 45 thousand Mexican producers of honey, which last year generated revenues of \$147 million for the country via exports.

The specialist José Rafael Limón Hernández, researcher at the center, explained that the insemination process. Once the bee is anesthetized, the ventral hook is cut open and about four million sperm are injected.

The organization is capable of performing up to 40 daily inseminations, and from this procedure about four thousand [queen bees](#) and eight thousand to 10 thousand virgins bees are obtained, which generate new hives.

The laboratory has binocular microscopes, stereoscopes and equipment to perform low cost practice for producers and three certified specialists in [artificial insemination](#) of bees.

The new center is part of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) of Mexico, which invested \$2 million through the National Commission for Arid Zones (CONAZA). Among the scientists who work in this center there are Sagarpa and Beekeeping Aguascalientes State Committee experts.

This state was chosen because of the health and genetic status of bees, which may be sent to other states to improve the quality of the swarms.

Aguascalientes is the leading producer of mesquite [honey](#), which is rich in pollen, very light yellow, presenting soft and fine crystallization, similar to butter, produced from flowering mesquite trees. Because of its characteristics and quality, mesquite honey is exported to countries of the European Union.

## Great demand for honey

Statistics from the Information Service of Agrifood and Fisheries (SIAP) indicate that annually around 56,907 tonnes of honey are produced, with an estimated value of two thousand million pesos.

The main producing states are: Yucatan, Jalisco, Campeche, Chiapas, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Puebla, Guerrero, Michoacan, Morelos and the State of Mexico.

From 2011 to 2013, on average \$123 million of honey was exported annually, and in 2014, the value of sales was 147 million, a figure that has not been recorded in the last 20 years. Germany tops the list of buyers of Mexican honey, acquiring 43 percent of the exported production; USA, 25 percent, followed by Belgium, with 12 percent. The latter bought 3,000 tons more last year than in 2013, Limón Hernández concluded.

Provided by Investigación y Desarrollo

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