

## Farmers' organizations serving farmers and rural territories

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### Algerian professional beekeepers launch their quality approach

Since the 2000s, the Ministry of Agriculture has implemented a plan to revive beekeeping in Algeria. In nearly 15 years, honey production has increased from 3,000 to 7,000 t.

In this dynamic, the National Association of Professional Beekeepers - Anap was created at the end of 2015. Professional beekeepers are facing many challenges, but the association has defined two of them as priorities: the organization of beekeepers around a quality approach and the commercial value addition of honey.

#### The honey analysis laboratory is put into service in 2019

To master these challenges of quality and value, Anap is setting up a honey analysis laboratory in 2019.

It should enable Anap to support and promote the implementation of a quality approach to beekeepers' production and to characterize honeys from new floral origins, such as jujube, euphorbia and thistle honeys. Through an in-depth analysis of representative samples, Anap will have the means for guaranteeing the traceability and quality of the jars produced and sold. Beekeepers, who wish to do it, will thus be able to fully satisfy consumers' expectations with their quality-controlled products.

The role of Anap through this laboratory is also to make beekeepers aware that there is a profitable market with high potential, for which the main limiting factor today is the low production level.

To ensure the proper start-up of the laboratory, Anap will benefit from external support from local researchers, who will come to train and supervise the laboratory staff, as well as experts from the Association pour le Développement de l'Apiculture Provençale (Association for the development of Provençal Beekeeping - ADAPI). In 2019, ADAPI will lead the beekeepers of Anap in their reflections on quality criteria and train them in the sensory analysis of their honey, with the medium-term objective of supporting Anap in defining its own quality specifications that the laboratory will be able to certify afterwards.

The cost of the analysis is currently estimated around 4000 to 5000 DZD (about 38 to 45 €) per sample. This price must partly cover of the laboratory's operating costs and contribute to the staff salaries, also covered by the Blida beekeeping cooperative (CASSA), Anap's partner.

The viability of the service offered by the laboratory is also considered in the reflections of the two partner organizations. However, the priority challenge of this first year will be to demonstrate to beekeepers the importance of the analysis of their products; improving quality, promoting the territory and marketing can play central role.



## The development of local entrepreneurship in Youssef el Seddik

Located in the northwestern part of the governorate of Fayoum, between the southern shore of Lake Qarun and the tourist regions of Wadi Rayan and Wadi el Hitan, the Youssef el Seddik association was created about 25 years ago, when farmers settled on these lands. NSCE and Fert have supported the association since 2014.

Following the policy initiated by President Nasser of reclaiming land in the desert, farmers established themselves in this area. This soil is not as fertile as the one that has benefited from the contributions of the Nile; water resources are limited because the village is relatively remote. The members of the association mainly produce aromatic and medicinal plants, various horticultural products, olives, etc. It is on these lands that technical training activities initially focused. Despite the agro-climatic difficulties, the association brings together a well-qualified human resources team; many of its members and board members have great knowledge on agriculture or agronomy.

### The Youssef el Seddik association: a future support service for entrepreneurs?

In 2018, after working for several years on strengthening the technical (production practices, post-harvest management, etc.) and organizational (governance, management, etc.) capacities of farmers and board members of the association, the farmers wanted to benefit from the entrepreneurship training that some young people in the community had been taking for a year at the University of Fayoum.

Farmers consider that with a deeper knowledge of entrepreneurship, they can improve the value-added of their products and their association. The proximity of several expanding tourist areas is a major asset in promoting their production and developing new activities that can be integrated into their current production system. This would involve, for example, setting up a cafeteria, making available to them some space for the regular sale of quality products (organic farming is possible in Youssef el Seddik, unlike old contaminated lands), etc.

Trainings focus on better entrepreneurial management and monitoring of business results. They also contribute to developing the entrepreneurial approach of members in their agricultural activities and will surely allow farmers to better appreciate the performance of their orchards and manage them in a more efficient way.



This training and monitoring programme was initiated with 20 farmers, members of the association. They are currently designing their projects and are showing a desire to get closer to the tourism sector in order to benefit from its effects on the local economy. Organic farming and olive production (in the form of oil or not) are important advantages in this sector because these products are appreciated by urban tourists in search of healthy and local products.

In the medium term, the opening of an entrepreneurship training service within the association could make it possible to perpetuate this much appreciated support. In this possible perspective, several of the young entrepreneurs from Youssef el Seddik followed the training of trainers (ToT) in entrepreneurship. NSCE, Fert's partner in Egypt, will support the Youssef el Seddik association in its strategic reflection and, if necessary, in the development of this service.

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