

# Leveling Up: Providing Innovative Tools and Resources for Beekeepers to Improve Business Success



@UFHoneyBeeLab

## BACKGROUND

Beekeeping is vital to the success of U.S. agriculture as many crops are heavily dependent on honey bee pollination for successful yield (Morse and Calderone, 2000; Calderone 2012). Typically, beekeepers transition from hobby to sideline operations by selling value-added honey bee products, and move on to become commercial beekeepers who generate revenue through pollination services. Though beginner beekeeping programs are readily available, there has been a significant lack of extension programs and resources available for beekeepers who are ready to turn their hobby into a business.

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## OBJECTIVES



### PLANNING

**By the end of the program:**  
75% will create a 3-year business plan.  
75% will develop a digital marketing product.

**1 year following the program:**  
75% will implement their business plan.



### VALUE ADDED

**By the end of the program:**  
75% will be able to create 2 value added products.

**1 year following the program:**  
70% will offer at least 1 new product for sale.



### SAFETY

**By the end of the program:**  
100% will be able to list 10 apiary safety practices.

**1 year following the program:**  
70% will implement 3 new safety practices.

**Within 1 year following program completion:**  
50% will report and annual revenue of at least \$2500 from their value added honey bee products.

## PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

- 30 Florida registered beekeepers
- 1-3 years of beekeeping experience
- >50% military veterans, women, young beekeepers, socially disadvantaged

"My own beekeeping journey has taken me down a similar path... In my first year, I grew from 1-3 hives; my second year I grew from 5 to 30 hives and used a spreadsheet to track income and expenses and made \$5000 net profit. I have actually 'leveled up' and would love to see more veterans and beekeepers do the same with programs like this that help them do so."

-Todd Truby, US Navy veteran



## OVERALL GOALS

1. Train beekeepers in business planning
2. Assist beekeepers with value-added product development
3. Help beekeepers develop digital market competence
4. Train beekeepers about apiary worker safety
5. Increased revenue for beekeepers

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased knowledge of business planning, budgeting, finances, risk management, rules and regulations, costs of beekeeping operations, branding, website/social media development, employee safety, hiring practices, proper field use equipment, heat illness prevention
- Increased skills in producing value-added products, using social media, finding new audiences, video editing, graphic design, message framing
- Increase sales of products