

Róbert Chlebo

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# Organic beekeeping in Slovakia

Up to 41% of the territory is covered by forests, where nectar sources can be found including raspberries, bilberries, blueberries and meadow herbs.

Only 1 beekeeper is certified as organic, even hundreds of beekeepers keeps the bees naturally





VČELIA FARMA MEDAR

Včelí med medovicový  
Jedl'ová medovica







# Legislation and certification

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- Legislation framework is covered by Regulation (Law) No. 189/2009 on organic farming.
- Central and Testing Institute in agriculture in Bratislava (Ministry of Agriculture) – registration of organic farmers
- Controlling and certification by independent organisation – Naturalis SK.
- Special associations (Demeter, Ekoniva, Kosher etc.) – own rules and certification systém.



**OSVEDČENIE O SPÔSOBILOSTI**  
**CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE**

na výrobu produktov z ekologického poľnohospodárstva/  
on Production of Organic Products in Organic Farming

Ev. č./No.: 076/2005

Ekologický výrobca/Organic Producer: **BIOAPIS-SK, VČELIA FARMA**  
**SHR Mária Bujňáková**

Adresa/Address: **082 74 Brezovica č.273**

IČO/Identification Number: **42026750**

Miesto činnosti/Place of Activities: **Brezovica**

Registračné číslo/No. of Registration: **SK-2005/332**

Poznámky/Remarks: **včelárska farma**

Ústredný kontrolný a skúšobný ústav poľnohospodársky na základe výsledkov kontrolnej práce porovnáva, že údaje registrácie (skladní produktov) zodpovedajú zariadeniu č. 421/2004 Z.z. o ekologickom poľnohospodárstve a Nariadeniu Rady (EÚ) č. 2002/91 o ekologickom výrobe poľnohospodárskych výrobkov a prírodných surovín poľnohospodárskych výrobkov a potravín v rámci jednotného predpisu.

Central Control and Testing Institute in Agriculture, on the basis of independent inspection guarantees that the above mentioned organic products have been produced according to principles of organic farming system stipulated by the Slovak Act No. 421/2004 Coll. and Council Regulation (EC) No. 2002/91 on organic production of agricultural product and indications referring thereto on agricultural products and foodstuffs and it's amendments.

Dátum/Date of Issue: **December 2005**



  
Ing. Anna Vitarusová,  
riadiťka organizácie a vedúca štátneho úradu  
Director of the Institute

Fotokópia osvedčenia nebolí zárukou. Iba originálne a podpísané osvedčenie garantomu ekologického kvality.  
Photocopies of certificate do not hold any guarantee! Only the original and signed certificate guarantees organic quality.



**OSVEDČENIE O SPÔSOBILOSTI**  
**CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE**

na výrobu potravín z ekologického poľnohospodárstva/  
on Production of Organic Foods

Ev. č./No.: 021/2005

Ekologický výrobca/Organic producer: **BIOAPIS-VČELIA FARMA**  
**SHR Mária Bujňáková**

Adresa/Address: **082 74 Brezovica č. 273**

IČO/Identification number: **42026750**

Miesto činnosti/Place of Activities: **Brezovica**

Registračné číslo/No. of Registration: **SK-2005/332**

Poznámky/Remarks: **výroba včelieho medu**

Ústredný kontrolný a skúšobný ústav poľnohospodársky na základe výsledkov kontrolnej práce porovnáva, že údaje registrácie (skladní produktov) zodpovedajú zariadeniu č. 421/2004 Z.z. o ekologickom poľnohospodárstve a Nariadeniu Rady (EÚ) č. 2002/91 o ekologickom výrobe poľnohospodárskych výrobkov a prírodných surovín poľnohospodárskych výrobkov a potravín v rámci jednotného predpisu.

Central Control and Testing Institute in Agriculture, on the basis of independent inspection guarantees that the above mentioned organic products have been produced according to principles of organic farming system stipulated by the Slovak Act No. 421/2004 Coll. and Council Regulation (EC) No. 2002/91 on organic production of agricultural product and indications referring thereto on agricultural products and foodstuffs and it's amendments.

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## CERTIFIKÁT BIOPOTRAVINY

Certificate of biofoodstuff

Evidenčné číslo / No. 2006 / 169

Subjekt / Subject: **Mária Bujňáková - SHR, BIOAPIS - SK VČELIA FARMA**

Adresa / Address: - **082 74 Brezovica 273**

Registračné číslo / Number of registration: **SK-2005/332**

Biopotravina / Biofoodstuff: **BIO MEDOVINA MARKUS**

Typ, odroda, kategória / Type, variety, category:

Balenie / Packing: **Sklenená fľaša „Bordo“ á 0,375 l, á 0,5 l, á 0,75 l**

Rok výroby / Year of production:

Množstvo / Quantity: **1 000 l**

Poznámky / Remarks:

Certifikát biopotraviny platí od **13.12.2006** do **13.12.2007**.

The certificate of origin of biofoodstuff is valid since **13.12.2006** till **13.12.2007**.

Certifikačný orgán ekologického poľnohospodárstva osvedčuje, že uvedená biopotravina bola vyprodukovaná podľa zásad ekologického poľnohospodárstva stanovených Zákonom č. 421/2004 Z.z. o ekologickom poľnohospodárstve a Nariadenia Rady (EHS) 2092/91 z 24. júna 1991 o ekologickej výrobe poľnohospodárskych výrobkov a príslušných označeniach poľnohospodárskych výrobkov a potravín v znení neskorších predpisov.

Certification body guarantees that the above mentioned biofoodstuff has been produced according to principles of organic farming, determined by the Act No. 421/2004 Coll. on organic farming and Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2092/91 on organic production of agricultural products and indications referring thereto on agricultural products and foodstuffs as amended.

Dátum / Date: **13.12.2006**



Vedúci certifikačného orgánu  
Head of certification body

Ing. Jaroslav Drobný

# Structure of beekeepers

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- Number of colonies is around 230 000
- Number of beekeepers 14 700
- Professionals: cca 60
- Who is interested in certification?
- Organic does not mean local.
- Trademark Slovak honey is linked also with quality.

# National rules for Organic (ecological, biodynamic) beekeeping

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- Organic beekeeping must be held on a stable apiary without transhumance.
- Within a radius of 3 km from the apiary nectar and pollen sources comes only from organically grown plants or spontaneous vegetation (which meets the terms of the Rules for the free collection of plants for the preparation of organic products).
- Sources of contaminants for bee pasture must be not presented in the distance of bee flight (e.g. towns, highways, landfills, industry, power plants).

# General rules for organic beekeeping

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- If the beekeeper has more than one apiary, all of them must meet criteria for organic production.
- Conversion period lasts usually 2 years (two seasons), but can be shorten (main limit is wax exchange according to the Rules).
- Local races of bees are preferred (Carniolan bee of Carpathian ecotype) with good grooming behaviour and resistance against *Varroa*.



©Foto: M. Bujňák



# General rules for organic beekeeping

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- Establishing of organic apiary is possible with natural or artificial swarms from conventional apiary or by buying bee colonies from existing organic apiaries.
- Maximum 10% of swarms and 10% of queens from conventional apiaries is allowed to be used yearly, if they are placed on foundations or combs meeting the Organic rules.
- Beekeeper must provide map with the locations of hives to the certification body.

# Bee nutrition

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- Sufficient amount of honey must be left in the hive for wintering.
- If there is a risk of crystallisation of winter storages (melecitose) feeding with sugar syrup (certified organic sugar) is allowed at the end of production season.
- In other periods of year only feeding with organic honey (honey combs) is allowed.

# Hives

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- Only natural material are allowed for hive's construction (wood, straw, clay...)
- For impregnation natural products are allowed (flax varnish, turpentine, propolis and natural pigments)

## Disinfection

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- To disinfect the hives, nuclei etc. physical measures are preferred, ie: flame, hot water, water vapor, solar heat.
- The chemicals allowed are warm solutions of Na and K, lime (Ca) water, sodium sulphate.
- Wax moth control of honeycombs: air ventilation, carbon dioxide, evaporation with acetic acid, peracetic acid, formic acid.

## Disease prevention

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- Selection of healthy colonies
- Regular exchange of queens, combs (30-40% yearly), minimal storages 7-10 kg.
- Against *Varroa*: formic, oxalic and lactic acid, menthol, thymol, eukalyptol.
- Winter fytoprevention (marguerite, dill, tomato, tanacet, tagetes, wallnut...)
- If alopatic treatment is necessary, it can be done after the main season, the combs are after treatment changed, followed by 1 year of conversion.

## General rules and recommendations

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- Closed cycle of wax and foundations at the apiary is necessary.
- Traditional anti-swarming practices are not allowed (e.g. queens's wing clipping, queen cells or drone brood removal).
- In transition period is recommended to use operculates from capped honey storages for making foundations.
- Is it using foundations real organic approach? There are several diameters of cell bottoms used...



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## Organic beekeepers in Slovakia

- In Slovakia only 1 certified bio apiary (Bioapis Brezovica – from 2005) exists up to date, with 400 hives.
- The main reason for this low number is complicated certification and controlling process together with stagnating prices for organic honey and absence of special supporting financial schemes.
- However many beekeepers keep their bees according organic farming principles and there is presumption, that number of certified organic beekeepers will grow after ratification of new supporting scheme for establishing bio-apiaries in September of this year.

Photos from Bioapis Brezovica – [www.biomed.sk](http://www.biomed.sk)



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# Frameless and foundationless beekeeping





©Foto: O. Javorka Blog





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©Foto: R. Chlebo

# Thank you!

Acknowledgments to MVDr. Jozef Juršík

A close-up photograph of a bee on a purple flower. The bee is positioned on a bright orange stamen, and its back is covered in bright orange pollen. The background is a soft-focus purple flower petal.

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