

MEXICO CHIAPAS

Brown sugar | citrus | toasted almond

FOOD 4 FARMERS
Food Every Day for Coffee-Growing Families

From each purchase of this coffee, Brio is pleased to contribute funds to support bee-keeping projects Food4Farmers is implementing with the CESMACH Cooperative. Learn more at www.food4farmers.org/our-projects/mexico/.

Beekeeping Program at the CESMACH Cooperative, Chiapas, Mexico

CESMACH is a coffee-growing community of 660 coffee-farming families in Chiapas, Mexico. The community has been hit hard by low coffee prices, climate change, and diseases like coffee leaf rust disease (Roya). They have made significant investments in replanting and renovating their aging coffee trees, to combat roya and increase the productivity of their farms. Trouble is, it takes 3 to 5 years for these new plants to start producing coffee cherries. How do they support their families and earn income in the meantime? Beekeeping.

Food 4 Farmers is working with CESMACH for the next 3 years, to build the coop's capacity to produce high quality honey. CESMACH has been producing and packaging honey for some time and boasts 50 experienced beekeepers. With partner ECOSUR, Food 4 Farmers is training another 20 coffee farmers -- including several women -- who want to begin new beekeeping ventures, to diversify and increase their income. When the new project started, the coop's 50 experienced beekeepers asked for more training to support their thriving beekeeping businesses -- so F4F added advanced trainings for this group. Much of their equipment and protective clothing is old and in poor condition, so F4F is raising funds to help all 70 beekeepers get the supplies they need. Along with producing more honey, F4F will be working with CESMACH to help them develop successful business plans for this growing -- and lucrative -- venture.



Photo: Julia Lockett

How lucrative is beekeeping? A new beekeeper can begin harvesting honey, and earning money, within a year. A beekeeper with only 9 hives can earn as much from beekeeping, working 2 days a week, as she or he can working a full-time, minimum wage job in Mexico. Beekeeping is a great way to diversify income for coffee-farming families. There is no need to own land. Farmers can keep all their coffee plants and just add bees!



CURATOR | ROASTER | PURVEYOR