



Asian Honeybee

Introduction

The use of the Asian Honeybee, *Apis Cerana*, in Afghanistan has proven to be more successful compared to using European Honeybees, *Apis Mellifera*, because they can better adapt to the pests, diseases and conditions in Afghanistan.

Advantages of Using Asian Honeybees

- Low initial investment because of simple equipment requirements and negligible operating costs
- Minimal colony management costs because Asian Honeybees suffers less from disease and pest pressure.
- Small-scale Asian Honeybee projects can return \$4.5 for every \$1 invested.
- Suitable for stationary beekeeping since Asian Honeybees do not tolerate moving the hive.
- Native to the region and have evolved to tolerate pests and diseases that can kill European Honeybee.
- Resistant to local mites
 - They have grooming behavior that reduces the impact of Varroa mites (Fig.1)
- Can fight off wasps (*Vespa Orientalis*, *Vespa Mandarina*, etc.)
 - Thermal-balling (100-150 bees surround a wasp and beat their wings, increasing the temperature to a lethal level for the wasp) protects Asian bees against wasps (Fig.2)
 - Bees actively defend hive entrance preventing wasps from entering hive
- Has the ability as an individual to survive temperatures as low as -0.1°C, a temperature lethal to European Honeybees.



Fig.1 Varroa Mite on bee



Fig.2 Thermal-balling

Disadvantages of Using Asian Honeybees

- Smaller foraging area and ill-suited for migratory beekeeping.
- Produces less honey per hive but the product can be considered more valuable in overseas markets.
- Cannot be raised near European Honeybee hives because Asian Honeybees will invade and take honey from the European Honeybees.