



**I have learned so much since starting this program; I have learned how to monitor bee activity, and how to check for healthy bees. I have enjoyed collecting the honey, which myself and my family love to eat.**

*-Participant*

# NORTHERN BEEKEEPING PROJECT

LOCATION: Barrows, Dauphin River, Portage, Spence Lake, MB

OBJECTIVE: Continue to explore the potential of beekeeping in the northern boreal forest for food security, community economic development and pollination.

Barrows, Dauphin River, Portage, and Spence Lake are small communities with less than 150 people each, located in the centre-north of the province.

### Successes

- The beekeeping project started in 2013, grew slightly in 2014
- Five families were supported to raise honey bees; two families were new program participants.
- Participants appreciated the learning opportunity for themselves, their families and communities.
- One family used the bee keeping as a school project for their home schooled children.
- Participants freely shared information about their bees with other community members.
- One family appreciated the health benefits of the honey comb.
- In 2014, over 1000 lbs of honey was collected and was used by participants, shared locally, given as gifts, and some was marketed locally.

### Next steps

- All three families involved in the evaluation want to continue beekeeping next year. They will continue building their apiary management skills to include 'splitting hives' and 're-queening hives'
- One family is supporting their daughter to expand the apiary in 2015 as her personal business so that honey can support the family needs and be available for sale locally.
- Individual families are working to develop a customer base for their projected 2015 sales. Some have given out samples locally to raise awareness of their apiaries
- Consider establishing a formal cooperative and ways to enhance production and marketing.
- Add another family for 2015.

### Challenges

- Not all families were able to produce honey.
- Some hives arrived to families during or after the main honey flow had taken place, limited the amount of honey produced in 2014.
- Families are geographically dispersed, making in-person meetings a challenge

	Honey	Hives
Family 1	800 lbs	12
Family 2	120 lbs	4
Family 3	50 lbs	3
Family 4	150 lbs	4
Family 5	No honey	

### Organizations involved

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and Northern Association of Community Councils partnered on the project.

**It is something we have long dreamed about being able to do... but in reality I don't know if we would have ever been able to afford [it without the program]... we are extremely thankful for this opportunity.**

*- Participant*