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Proposal of regulations for pot-honey produced by four genera of Meliponini bees: *Geotrigona*, *Melipona*, *Scaptotrigona*, *Tetragonisca* in Ecuador

Megabiodiverse Ecuador is also known for the Meliponini entomofauna, with almost 100 species in the three Southernmost provinces El Oro, Loja and Zamora Chinchipe. The species chosen by ancestral knowledge of Ecuadorian stingless bee keepers for pot-honey production are known as “abeja de tierra” *Geotrigona leucogastra*, “angelita” *Tetragonisca angustula*, “bermejo” *Melipona mimetica*, “catiana” *Scaptotrigona ederi*. Along this research, 18 honeys were collected in El Oro, Esmeraldas, Loja and Manabí provinces. Chemical quality indicators used in the honey standards comprise water, free acidity, hydroxymethylfurfural, reducing sugars, apparent sucrose, ash contents. The quality standards of pot-honeys vary from those suggested by the Codex Alimentarius and adapted by National Honey Regulations for *Apis mellifera*. Great variations are observed in our four genera. *Geotrigona* honey is very different from *Apis mellifera* and other Meliponini with water contents duplicating the honey standard, and free acidity with more than 800 meq/kg. Ash, hydroxymethylfurfural and apparent sucrose keep the same standard, but reducing sugars are lower than the minimum of 65 g/kg. The Colombian honey norm included new standards for native bees in the annex in 2007, Venezuela suggested to have standards of honey and pot-honey in the same norm in 2013, and Brazil created a norm for *Melipona* honey in the state of Bahia in 2014. Philippines is working on the concept to have both *Apis mellifera* and *Tetragonula birai* quality standards in one honey norm. The NTE INEN 1572 Ecuadorian honey norm was reviewed in 2016 and decided a new norm is needed for pot-honey.

Biography

Patricia Vit has studied Biology and MSc Food Science at Universidad Simon Bolivar, Venezuela. She became Professor at Universidad de Los Andes in 1985. She completed her PhD at Cardiff University, UK and Post-doctoral studies from National University of Singapore, School of Medicine and The University of Sydney, School of Medicine. She lived in Ecuador for one year with the Prometeo-SENESCYT grant at Universidad Técnica de Machala. She is the Founder Director of an initiative named Living Museum of Meliponini Bees in the World. She has published more than 100 papers in reputed journals, and 30 books as author or editor.

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