

Black BeeOme™

Sourcing



The black bee

After the last ice age the dark bee (*Apis mellifera mellifera*) settled in the region north of the Alps. In the course of time local species have evolved.

In Switzerland this was the black bee (*A.m.m.nigra*). In the last 150 years, the "normal" honey bee has taken over most of the habitat of the black bee, which today is endangered and only lives in small protected populations (*Pro Specie Rara*).

Compared to the modern high performance honeybee, the black bee is very resilient and is possibly immune to varroa, the mite that attacks bees and is one of the attributed reasons for world wide bee population decline.



Apis mellifera mellifera
The ancestor of our honeybees.

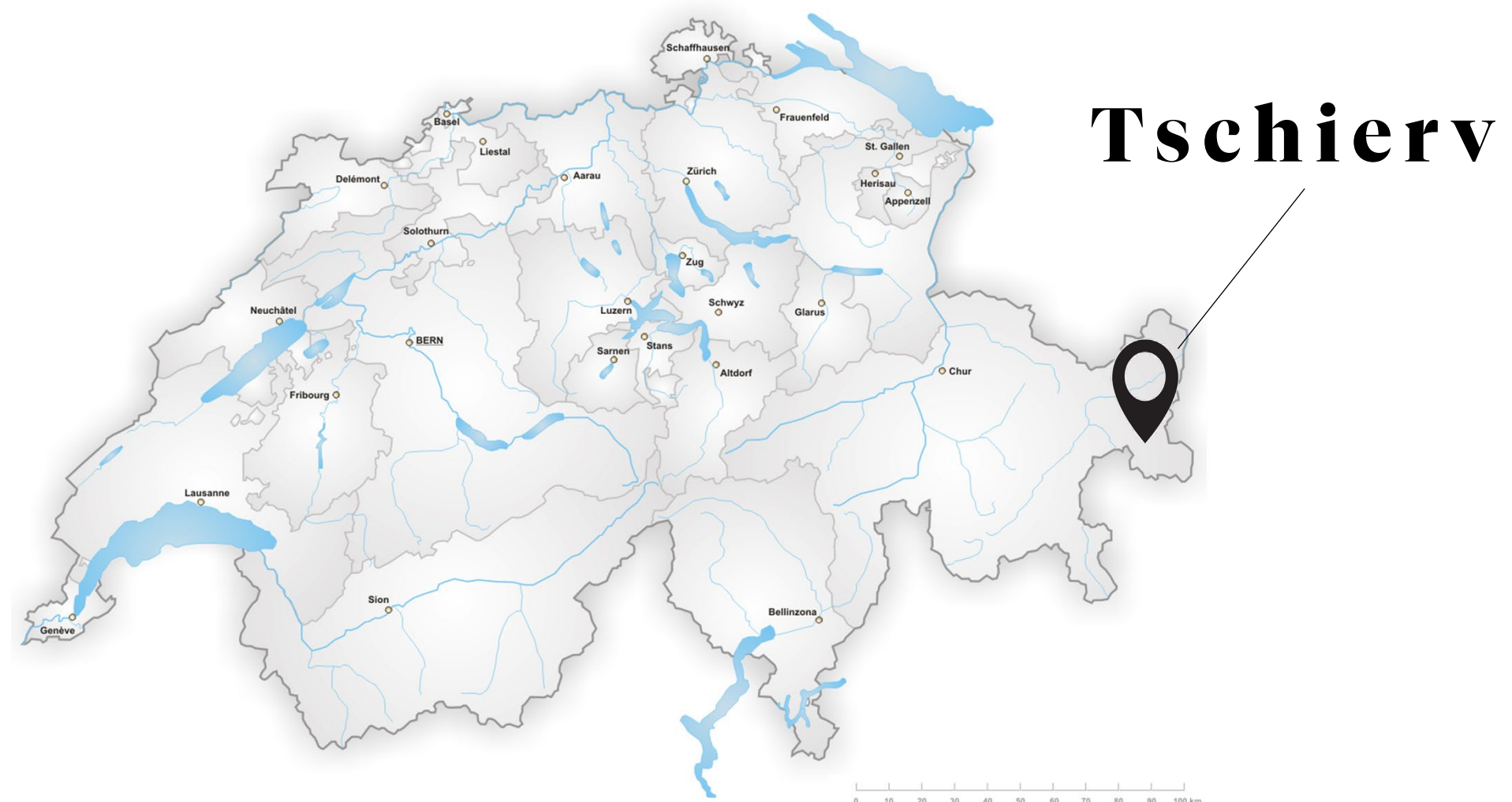


Apis mellifera ligustica
The Italian bee, most abundant honey bee in the world.



Location

There are small native protected black bee populations throughout Switzerland. We receive the honey for Black BeeOme™ from different valleys in Switzerland, one of our suppliers is a local lady who has a small bee colony in the picturesque Münster Valley at 1660 m a.s.l. The bee house is idyllically situated at the edge of a forest, surrounded by amazing flowering meadows.









People

One of our bee-keepers, Renata Bott, has been dealing with bees since a long time. The small bee house next to the forest has been built over 20 years ago.

From bee breeding to honey bottling, everything is still done by hand today. The job of beekeeping is very demanding and various. Especially spring and summer is very busy and spending 10 hours a day with the bees is not uncommon.

In winter, she lets the bees rest, because if one would disturb them, they would die. A beekeeper must observe carefully – to not disturb the bees, but always do the most necessary things. Often this is a tightrope walk.





Process

The primary goal of the bee colony is to ensure survival - the workers collect nectar around the clock, raise new larvae and ensure that the queen is satisfied.

Every day, new larvae hatch from the queen's eggs. If a larva is chosen as queen, it represents the center of the whole swarm. It is raised with special substantial food and only flies out once or twice in its life to be mated by the male drones. She then spends the rest of her life in the beehive and lays over 1000 eggs a day.



Process

The bees fly out and bring the collected nectar back to the beehive and store it. The honey needs time to ripen, because often honey also contains water which must evaporate.

When the bees start to cover the combs, the honey is ripe. Then the combs are taken out and the wax caps are loosed with a special fine fork.

After that, the honey is centrifuged and filtered, and it must rest before it is filled into glasses.



Interesting bee facts

- There are on average **30'000 female workers** in a swarm
- 3 kg of nectar have to be collected for the production of 1 kg of honey
- The flight distance covered by one bee for 1 kg of honey equals **1 circumnavigation** of the earth
- Female workers have an average life span of **3 weeks** in summer
- The drones have only one purpose in their lives, which is the fertilization of the queen
- **3000 flowers** are pollinated by a single bee in its life
- A worker can reach up to **50km/h** when flying out



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