



Somerset’s Bumbleberry Farms, LLC Buzzes to the Sound of Sweetness

When Karen Mosholder steps out into the bee yard, she finds the perpetual buzz to be soothing. “It requires one to move with slow deliberation and to quell internal fears, great traits for entrepreneurs!” she says. Mosholder is the queen bee of Bumbleberry Farms, LLC— a small enterprise tucked in the foothills of Pennsylvania’s Laurel Mountains. Creating and selling honey-based products is their specialty, one that the entire east coast is beginning to recognize.

What started as a beekeeping hobby soon became a viable business for Mosholder, but with the nearest commercial kitchen several hours away, she started looking at alternative options to create her value-added honey products. This is where Rural Development stepped in. Through a Value-Added Producer grant, Rural Development was able to provide \$27,300 for marketing packaging, labeling, and other promotional expenses associated with the production and sales of Bumbleberry Farms products. The grant also funded her first showing at the 2015 Philadelphia Flower Show, where she sold about 4,000 jars of her products.



“The grant has been a god-send for me and my business,” says Karen Mosholder, owner of Bumbleberry Farms (photo courtesy: Lyra Mag).

With their products now being sold in specialty shops across 10 different states, as well as 4 major retailers along the east coast, the results speak for themselves. “I think the greatest benefit [of the VAPG program] is really two-fold,” Mosholder says, “the challenging process of thinking about how I might grow my business has made me a better entrepreneur and strategic planner, and two, I was able to more than double my sales—from \$105,000 to \$232,000—and I have plans to continue that growth moving forward.” With a solid plan, unique and marketable products, and a little help from Rural Development, Bumbleberry Farms now operates with one simple vision:

Bee Happy.

Community Vision: With the drive to learn something new and the aim to offer something different, Bumbleberry Farms set out to create unique honey-based products in PA’s Somerset County.

Investment: USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer Grant- \$27,300
Recipient Contributions- \$27,300

Congressional District: PA-12

Partners: Bumbleberry Farms, LLC

Demographics: Population of the Borough of Somerset– 6,762, and growing statewide

Impact: From honey-based skin creams to honey-based spreads, to jars of nectar where profits benefit local charities, Bumbleberry products can be found at 4 national retailers from Maine to Washington DC.