



Huntingdonshire Beekeepers' Association

PREPARING FOR A HONEY SHOW

Your aim should be to present your product in the best possible way. The best tasting honey does not always win. Be mindful of every detail. Be sure to read the directions given for presentation. If you do not comply with the directions, you could be disqualified before the judging begins.

Entering Honey:

Jars:

Honey should be presented in max 1lb, min 8oz jars. The jars should be identical where more than one jar is specified in a class entry description. (Gamber or Queenline). DO NOT use plastic jars.

- You will need to enter the specified number of jars of the same honey for any category you enter. All jars should look identical.
 - Categories include: Light, Light Amber, Amber, Dark.
 - Entrant will make a determination for the class they believe their honey belongs in and note it on the entry form.
 - The judge will decide which category your honey will be entered in. He/she may use a Colour Scale and match the colours to the charts
- Wash your jars with very hot water.
 - Soap will leave a smell in the jar (the honey will NOT overpower the smell of soap).
 - DO NOT DRY with a paper towel. You DO NOT want lint on or in your jar.
 - You can dry the jars in the oven on low if you would like.
- Labels: No labels are required for local and county shows

Caps: Plastic vs. Metal:

- Plastic caps have a less clean/crisp sound when opening.
- Metal is recommended as it has a nice, clean ring to it when opened. The lid has a “ring” when it is removed
 - The judge will look at the top of your honey jar to check for hair and/or dirt.
 - Be sure your lid is clean. Avoid any dust in the lid. (The Devils in the Details!)
- only use fresh clean and unscratched lids. Do not use a safety seal. They leave marks on the jar.
- Plastic wrap between the jar and the lid is not advisable. It will only cause a mess when it's being removed. The judges do not mind a bit of honey on the inside

Filling the Jars:

Fill the jars to the top of the ring on the jar. The ring sits **BELOW** the thread and is not part of the thread that adheres the lid to the jar.

- When the lid is on you do **NOT** want to see any air space.
(See the illustration for fill lines)



- It is better to overfill than underfill the jar. You can remove any excess honey with a teaspoon.
- Foam: Honey coming from a cold bucket pulls air into it. Be sure to give yourself enough time to allow the foam to rise and be removed.
- It is best to have honey warm when packing it.
- Strain your honey well.
 - A new knee-high nylon stocking is a great filter for honey for a show.
 - DO NOT strain through cheese cloth. There is too much lint.
 - There should be no bits or particles of bees in the honey.
 - Be sure nothing has adulterated your honey.
 - NO dust, cat/dog hair, human hair.
- All jars should look the same and be uniformly filled.
- When you fill, line your jars up to ensure uniformity
- Clean the jar of any spills or bits that have stuck on. We all know that honey gets everywhere but smudges and fingerprints can lose you points!

Taste/Smell:

- The judge is looking for a natural flavour. You want to avoid a burnt or soapy flavour. Again, clean jars and dry in the oven - be sure not to overheat your honey.

Moisture:

- Extracting honey when humidity is high tends to pull in moisture. A Refractometer tests the honey for moisture. This will tell the judge the number of points to add or subtract.

For those who do not have access to a refractometer, try the toothpick test-

- Put a toothpick into the jar and take it out. If the honey comes off quickly there is too much moisture.
- Moisture can be pulled out by placing the jars in a low temperature oven. Jarred honey can be heated to 100 degrees
- Let all bubbles to rise to the surface of the jar. A toothpick can come in handy again to pop them.

Beeswax

- Pure beeswax weight as specified by the class number
- Optimum colour is lemon yellow
- Should be cleaned properly
- Presented on solid base (wood or cardboard) with no larger than a 1-inch margin
- Entries judged by cleanliness, uniformity of appearance, colour, aroma, and absence of cracks and shrinkage.

Section and Cut Comb: 3 containers

- Graded on cut if applicable, cleanliness, dryness of cappings, uniformity, density, and flavor.
- Three basswood boxes in windowed sections with clear plastic lid or cut comb in clear plastic container

Mead

- All entries must have been produced by members using honey from the member's own bees, by means of fermentation.
- Dry, Sweet, and Made with Fruit Juices entries should be contained in a single 750 ml or 25.4 fl. oz. clear glass wine bottle.
- Natural cork, plastic stoppers, or screw top closures are all acceptable.
- Sparkling Mead entries should be in champagne-type glass bottles and need not be clear.

Chunk Honey: 3 jars

- Jars must be clear glass.
- Must contain at least 12 but no more than 16 ounces of honey by weight.
- Graded on cut if applicable, cleanliness, dryness of cappings, uniformity, density, and flavor.