

Rules for the Honey Contest 2011

1. Once honey or other items have been accepted into the competition by the Steward, it is the responsibility of Florida State Beekeepers Association to protect the entries from being handled or tampered with in any way.
2. After submitting entries to the Steward, competitors may not enter the area where the entries have been placed.
3. The Steward or Judges are the only persons who may enter the honey judging area.

General Rules

All entries must be produced by the contestant within the last calendar year. This time restriction does not apply to entries in Mead, photography, art and gadgets.

All entries of honey, wax, and mead must be from bees belonging to current members of the Florida State Beekeepers Association

Each member may make one entry only in each class. Families may have two entries with each entry under a separate name.

The classes are:

Honey

Class 1: Extracted Honey:

All forms of extracted honey are to be presented in one pound glass jars.

Extracted honey is judged in three classes: light, medium, and dark.

Entrants may submit one entry in each of these three classes.

One entry of extracted honey is defined as three (3) one pound jars.

Jars must be either:

1. one pound glass Queenline jars with a 48mm diameter mouth, or
2. one pound glass Queenline jars with a 58mm diameter mouth
3. Lids may be either metal or plastic.

Considerations: When judging extracted honey, the judges evaluate the following characteristics of each entry:

- No labels on the jars.
- Do not use tamper proof seals

Cleanliness of the jar and lid

Correct fill level

Uniformity of the three jars that comprise the entry

Cleanliness and clarity of the honey

Moisture content

Aroma and flavor

Class 2: Chunk honey

1. One entry of chunk honey is defined as three (3) 1 lb sized jars.

2. Chunk honey must be displayed in straight sided, glass, wide mouth, jars.

3. The glass should not be embossed. Such jars are available from many commercial beekeeping suppliers.

4. Only one chunk of honey should be in each jar for competition.

Considerations: The criteria cited above for judging extracted honey apply to judging chunk honey as well.

The chunk of comb must be in one piece.

The cuts should be clean and uniform.

The chunk comb should be cut and sized to appropriately fit the container. Honey should fill the rest of the jar to the appropriate fill line.

The comb "chevrons" should be pointed upward.

The comb should extend the length of the jar

Comb is judged for equal amounts on either side of the center rib and cappings that are neither sunken nor perforated

Class 3: Creamed Honey

1. An entry of creamed honey is three (3) eight ounce jars.

2. Creamed honey must be displayed in clear straight-sided glass jars with solid lids.

Considerations: Creamed honey is judged on the fineness of crystals, uniformity and firmness of product, cleanliness and freedom from foam or from added flavors or colors.

Class 4: Cut comb

1. An entry of cut comb honey is three (3) boxes.

2. The boxes must be made for displaying cut comb.

3. The boxes must be transparent on all sides.

4. The chunk of comb must be in one piece

5. The cuts should be clean and uniform

6. There should be no leaking of honey from comb into the box

Considerations: Cut comb honey entries are not judged for flavor. Some of the judging criteria are uniformity of appearance and color

(including the honey in the comb), cleanliness, absence of uncapped cells, no "wet" cell appearance, freedom from granulation, pollen, and brood. Weight should be uniform for each section. Total weight of the entire entry (3 sections) may be used as a tie breaker.

Class 5: Section comb honey

1. An entry of section comb honey is three (3) sections.

2. Round sections and square section entries must be displayed in the original square or circular section.

3. Square sections must be in a cellophane bag and placed inside a window carton made for the display of section comb honey.

4. Round sections must be in clear plastic boxes made for the display of section comb honey.

Considerations: Section comb honey entries are not judged for flavor. Some of the judging criteria are uniformity of appearance and color (including the honey in the comb), cleanliness, absence of uncapped or leaking cells, no "wet" cell appearance, freedom from granulation and pollen, and uniform weight of each section. Total weight of the entire entry (3 sections) may be used as a tie breaker.

Class 6: Black jar

SORRY, NO BLACK JAR CONTEST THIS YEAR

Beeswax

Wax is judged on cleanliness, uniformity of appearance and shape, color, aroma, and absence of defects such as cracks and shrinkage.

An entry of beeswax may be made in each of the following classes:

Class 7: Wax block

1. The block must be at least one inch thick

but not more than two inches thick.

2. The block must weigh a minimum of two pounds, (but no more than three pounds)
3. The block should be smooth-surfaced and free of decorations or embellishments.

Class 8: Mmolded or dipped tapers

1. An entry for dipped tapers is defined as four (4) candles
2. An entry for molded tapers is defined as three (3) candles
3. Minimum length is eight inches.
4. One of the candles in each entry will be burned.
5. Molded tapers must have flat finished bases.
6. The wicks must be trimmed to one-half inch in length.
7. Dipped tapers should have the last drip left on; the wicks must be left joined.

Class 9: Molded form

1. An entry is defined as one (1) candle
2. The form must have a flat finished base.

Mead

SORRY, NO MEAD CONTEST THIS YEAR

Class 13: Photographs

1. Each member may enter one photograph.
2. A 3" x 5" white card on which a brief description of the photograph is written must accompany each entry.

3. Art and photography must be presented in a self-standing frame, and each accompanied with a 3 x 5 card giving the title, and brief "story" behind the piece.
4. Photograph must not have been previously entered in a honey contest

Class 14: Art work

1. Each member may enter one art work.
2. A 3" x 5" white card on which a brief description of the art work is written must accompany each entry.
3. Art must not have been previously entered in a honey contest

Class 15: Crafts

1. Each member may enter one craft item.
2. A 3" x 5" white card on which a brief description of the craft is written must accompany each entry.
3. Craft entry must not have been previously entered in a honey contest

Awards

It is the intention that ribbons will be given in all classes even if there is only one entry in the class. However, in order to place and receive an award that entry must still meet the place (1st, 2nd, 3rd) criteria and be deemed worthy of the award by the judge or judges.

A solitary entry in a class does not guarantee a place award if it does not meet standards for that level. A solitary entry may neither meet 1st place criteria nor even 2nd place and may only be awarded 3rd place, or no place award at all, based on the criteria met.

Ribbons will be: Blue for First Place, Red for

Second Place, White for Third Place, and Purple for Best of Show.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SHOWING HONEY

1. Select the honey you wish to enter:

Pass the honey through the finest filter you have. The set of three sieves sold for this purpose by bee supply houses works very well, especially when the honey is warm from the hive on extracting day. Never use cheesecloth because it has many loose fibers. Never use pantyhose, old or new. They contain dyes that can affect the color and flavor of your honey.

After sieving, allow the honey to sit in a tightly covered bucket in a warm place for as long as possible so that debris and air bubbles rise to the top. Skim off the foam and debris with a spoon, and repeat the process a couple of more times if possible.

If the show you plan to enter is several months away, you may want to freeze a one-half gallon jar of the honey until closer to the time of the competition. The half gallon jar of honey is more than enough to fill the four competition jars you will want for the show. Freezing is the best way to preserve the flavor, fragrance, and general quality of the honey.

2. Select the jars you will use:

The standard container for honey judging is the 1 lb., #2 glass Queenline jar. If you are choosing four jars from a large number of jars, try to find ones with as few blemishes in the glass as possible. The quality of these jars is universally terrible. The judges, however, recognize this fact, and they also can tell the difference between blemishes in the glass and faults in the honey.

Your actual entry will be three identical jars, but it is wise to prepare four jars, just in case there is a problem with one or you need extra

identical honey to add to one of your three competition jars.

The molded white plastic lids are by far the nicest.

Never, at any time throughout this process, use Windex or any other cleaning aid on the inside or outside of the jars. The slightest residue of fragrance will be noticed by the judges.

No cotton swabs ever.

No paper towels ever.

Never, never, never assume that your jars are clean.

Before you start cleaning the jars, check each one for the tiny numbers put on at the factory. These can be in a single line about one inch down from the top, or in a square pattern about two inches up from the bottom. In both cases, the numbers will be on one of the flat faces of the outside of the jar. They are often very hard to see, but if you are using new jars, the numbers are on the jars somewhere. These can be removed with soapy water or alcohol on a soft cloth. Find these numbers now and remove them.

The washing of jars is done by hand. Period. Dishwashers don't even come close to doing this job.

Wash the jars thoroughly inside and out using dishwashing detergent, the hottest water you can tolerate, a wash rag, and a bottle brush. Rinse with very hot water. Rinse again with very hot water. The final rinse can be with boiling water.

Allow to air dry. Leave the jars up side down for about 10 minutes. Tap each jar on a folded cloth to knock out any remaining water droplets. Invert the jars, stand upright, and cover with a clean, lint-free cloth. Do not dry inside the jar with a cloth because this can leave behind fibers that will show up in the

judging. However, look very carefully for any water that may be lurking in the dip where the inside wall of the jar meets the inside bottom of the jar. This can be hard to see. A flat weave cotton or linen cloth folded around the tip of a table knife can be used to dab this up.

Smell the inside of each jar.

3. Fill your four selected jars:

Pour the honey into your jars, filling to within a couple of hairs of the rim, almost to the point of overflowing. Cover with a small piece of plastic wrap, put on the lid, and set aside in a warm place. (You may want to wrap the jars carefully, pack securely in a carton, and put in the trunk of your car. The warmth and jiggling encourages bubbles and impurities to rise to the top.) Check once a week, skimming any foam or particles that have risen to the top, and recovering with a new piece of plastic wrap. If there isn't much time until the competition, the jars may be placed in a container of hot water, not hotter than 120 degrees, to encourage the bubbles to rise. Keep in mind that exposing honey to high temperatures changes the flavor. For this reason, avoid microwaving the honey; the temperature is too difficult to control in a microwave. Look at the honey with a strong light behind the jar to check for bubbles and other impurities. These can sometimes be teased out with a thin wire or skewer.

4. Make final preparations for the competition:

Some notes on cloths: It is not ever a good idea to have "a special" cloth for wiping the jars. Instead you should plan to have at least one cloth for each jar of honey in your entry. Very old, oft' laundered, flat weave cotton or linen dish towels or men's handkerchiefs work well for all the jar cleaning you will want to do from this point on. Once you have selected the cloths you want to use, you may want to boil them to be absolutely certain they are clean and free of grease.

Never include fabric softener when laundering

these cloths.

A week or two before the competition, set out your jars, and locate what looks like an O ring of glass on the outside of the jar that aligns with the bottom of the lid when the lid is screwed on. Your goal is to have the surface of the honey precisely at the top of this ring when you set the jars on the competition table.

First, remove the lids and the piece of plastic wrap. Remove any bubbles or other bits that are on the surface of the honey and around the mouth of the jar. Once this has been done, using a small spoon, the tip of a knife, or a chopstick, dip out honey to lower the level of the honey in the jar to just above the glass ring. Clean the rim of the jar carefully, using a barely damp cloth. Cover the jar with a new piece of plastic wrap, wash the lid, rinse with very hot water, dry well, and screw onto the jar. Set aside in a warm place. Check the surface of the honey the day before the contest, just in case. Put on a new piece of plastic wrap, and close the jar.

5. The day of the competition, at home or in the hotel:

Prepare a small box in which to carry your jars of honey to the competition, or use the same one in which you transported the honey to the hotel. Include cloths to protect the jars in transit; lint free cloths to wipe the outsides of the jars; damp, lint free cloths in a plastic bag if you won't have access to water at the competition site; and some tooth picks or skewers.

Open the jars, remove the plastic wrap, with a toothpick lift out any bits that may be on the surface of the honey. Using a clean toothpick or skewer, carefully dip out the last few drops of honey to make the level perfectly aligned with the glass ring on the neck of the jar. Wipe the neck of jars with a slightly damp lint free cloth, dry, place a new piece of plastic wrap on each jar, clean the outer lid, dry, and

screw onto the jar. Pack carefully into the box.

6. In the honey judging area:

Unpack the jars, remove the outer lids, then the plastic wrap. The neck of the jars should be very clean at this point, but wipe one last time with a slightly damp, lint free cloth, and dry. You don't want any stickiness on the jar, inside or out, or on the lid. Look one last time for any particles on the surface of the honey, and screw on the lids, not too tight and not too loose. From this point on, keep the jars upright at all times.

Carefully wipe the outside of each jar with a slightly damp lint-free cloth, removing any fingerprints or other marks, and dry with another dry, lint free cloth.

Wash your hands thoroughly.

From this point on, handle the jars only by the lid. To be on the safe side, place a clean cloth between your fingers and the lids of the jars.

Check the honey in with the clerk, and...wait for the decision of the judges!