

Section O – Honey

Convenor: Crispin Boxhall

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Location: Show Hall Southern Annex

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- Entry form submissions close Thursday 4 November 2021 at 8.00pm.
- Junior competitor definition is 16 years and under as at 30 April 2021.
- Exhibits must be delivered to the Section for judging by 9.00am Sunday 7 November or prior, to the Secretary's office by arrangement with Secretary or Convenor.
- Exhibits to be collected between 4.30 and 5.30pm on Show Day via the Convenor or Steward.
- Any exhibits left after 5.30pm will be discarded unless prior arrangement has been made. **Please note that due to COVID, no Honey entered can be taken home unless a Participation Risk Acknowledgment & Waiver form has been completed. Available from the Convenor.**
- Please state age on entry form if 16 or under.
- Guidelines for Exhibitors may be obtained from the Secretary or Convenor.

Sash for Champion Honey
Sash for Young Beekeeper of the Show

Refined Honey

1. Extracted Liquid Honey, Native Flora, in the light amber range
2. Extracted Liquid Honey, Native Flora, in the medium to dark amber range
3. Extracted Liquid Honey, Imported Flora, in water white to light amber range
4. Extracted Liquid Honey, Imported Flora, medium to dark amber range

Beekeeper Novice

5. Extracted Liquid Honey, Any Flora, any colour range

Junior Beekeeper

6. Extracted Liquid Honey, Any Flora, any colour range

Any Other Product

7. Candied Honey, (naturally granulated), any colour
8. Creamed Honey
9. Chunk, Block or Comb Honey (sealed on any size frame)
10. Beeswax, natural, in approximately 500gm block or mould

GUIDELINES FOR SECTION O HONEY EXHIBITORS

One of the primary products of beekeeping is liquid or extracted honey. Every beekeeper knows that he/she produces high quality honey; but how can you be sure? One of the best methods is to enter your honey in a honey judging contest and be compared to your peers.

When submitting your entry do not write your name on the submission, nor attach sticky labels. Simply write the required details clearly on a clean piece of paper and fix it firmly in place with an elastic band. These get removed prior to judging so the judge has a clear view of the entry and has no idea who submitted it.

Winning a ribbon in a honey judging contest definitely gives the beekeeper bragging rights.

To win those bragging rights, the beekeeper should definitely understand the judging process and what characteristics the judges consider. From a practical standpoint the judges really represent very conscientious honey consumers, but they may be emphasizing several factors that may seem unimportant to the beekeeper. The remainder of these judging notes explain the factors that the judges use in evaluating honey and why they are important, using Figure 1 as an example of a typical judging score card.

Section O. Honey Judge's Score Card – Liquid Honey		
Event:		
Class:		
Entry No.		
Point Scores		Characteristic
Maximum Available	Given	
30		Cleanliness: absence of lint, dirt, wax and foam
15		Absence of candying
15		Flavour: absence of overheating and fermentation
15		Colour and brightness
15		Container: cleanliness and uniformity
10		Density (Moisture over 20% to be disqualified)
Total		
Judge's Remarks		

Figure 1: Judge's score card for extracted liquid honey

1. Density or Moisture Content: All honey contains moisture or water; honey is really a variety of sugars dissolved in water. Excess moisture increases the growth of yeast cells that naturally occur in honey and can result in fermentation which will spoil the honey and make it unfit for human consumption. Honey is defined by the United Nations as having a moisture content (water) of no more than 20%. Judges often use a cut-off point of 20% and disqualify entries with additional moisture. Judges may assign more points to honey of very low moisture contents. Containers of honey with moisture levels over 20% do appear very watery (fluid) to the naked eye and the beekeeper can have the honey tested with a refractometer.

2. Absence of Candying: All honey will eventually "candy" (granulate or crystallize) even though the process may take from several months to many, many years. Candying is the term usually used to describe liquid honey which has been solidified. Candying is not a good attribute for liquid honey prepared for judging or for sale. The presence of crystals or granules can usually be detected in the honey if they occur in more than a very small amount, and they give an uneven or gritty appearance to the honey. This can result in two problems. The first is a minor cosmetic problem and many consumers assume that crystallized or granulated honey is spoiled and they will either not purchase it or discard it if the granulation process becomes apparent after the honey is placed in the home. A more serious problem is that the formation of granules/crystals in liquid honey will increase the moisture content of the remaining liquid portion of the product which can lead to fermentation. Judges will subtract points for honey that is granulated or crystallized.

3. Cleanliness: A look at Figure 1 shows that this category accounts for 30% of the total points assigned by the judges for liquid honey. Cleanliness including lint, dirt, wax, and foam are among the most easily controlled factors by the beekeeper and carry a high penalty if dirty honey is entered into competition. The terms are self-explanatory with the possible exception of foam, which refers to air bubbles trapped in the honey. There really is no excuse for dirty honey.

4. Flavour: Flavour is a very subjective characteristic and the use of flavour as a factor in judging honey is usually limited to checking for *fermentation* and *overheating*. Fermentation will give a sour taste to the honey and overheating will give the honey a caramelized (burnt sugar) taste. The flavours associated with different honey sources should not be a factor in honey judging, unless the floral source produces a honey with a very disagreeable flavour.

5. Colour and Brightness: Most consumers prefer honey with a clear colour and some brightness. The judges will consider these characteristics but it should be noted that colour does not mean that a light colour honey will receive more points than a dark colour honey. Liquid honey is usually grouped into colour categories by the convenor or the judges of the honey show prior to judging. The factors of clear colour and brightness in honey are partially a result of cleaning or filtering the honey and slightly heating it prior to competition. The process may consist of pouring the heated honey (never heat honey over 50C for any period of time) through a filter of some sort to remove impurities. This process not only improves the cosmetic appearance of the honey but it also decreases the possibility that granulation and fermentation will occur.

6. Container Appearance: The actual requirements for container type should be specified in the entry requirements for the honey judging. Be sure to comply with those rules and don't enter the wrong size container or a container made of an unacceptable material. The judges will pay special attention to the cleanliness and lack of wear to the container and its lid. This attention to container and lid cleanliness includes the inside of the lid. For the Uraidla Show try to use a 500 gram clear glass round jar. This is what most people would call a standard size jam jar.

Entering honey into judged competitions can be an educational and valuable experience for the beekeeper. Good judging based on an objective criterion can be used to evaluate packaged liquid honey and also suggest areas for improvement. Always ask for completed evaluation forms from the judges for your entries and consider their comments. Honey judging can help the beekeeper improve his/her product, improve the honey's future marketability, and even give some bragging rights if a ribbon and/or a cash premium is won.

For Chunk Honey the piece submitted must measure 10cm x 10cm, it must be submitted either on a white plate or clear plastic dish (take away dishes are good), and should not be leaking honey.

For Honey Comb (framed) the exhibit should be presented so that the cells are capped in new clean wax capping. The frame should be presented on a stand so that the judge can examine it. The frame should be free from propolis, wax and other hive debris.

For Block Comb the exhibit should be presented in its own container with a lid that can be easily removed for judging. The cells should be capped and the container should be clean and free from propolis, wax and other hive debris.