

# Preparing for the 2019 American Honey Show

## *Helpful Hints and Tips*

### ***HONEY SHOW RULES***

- Make sure you understand the rules! (*See Official Rules for more information.*)
- All entries must be 100% pure honey or 100% beeswax.
- A person may enter as many classes as desired; one entry per class.

### ***ENTRIES***

- **Liquid Honey**
  - Sort your frames by color before extracting.
  - Excessive heat is the enemy.
  - Uncapping with an electric knife darkens honey.
  - Correct moisture content is critical – know the rules.
  - Strain, strain, strain.
  - Dust and lint are also enemies.
  - Check for froth and proper filling height.
- **Comb Honey**
  - Check comb honey for pollen in cells.
  - Frames for showing must be clean.
  - Heat, even from a lamp, is the enemy.
  - Cutting comb honey for square plastic boxes – practice cutting comb and find the knife that works best; drain comb for plastic section boxes.
- **Chunk Honey**
  - Two components – liquid honey and cut comb.
  - Comb for chunk must be cut with cells upward – the same way the bees built it.
  - Select and clean your containers.
  - Cut the comb and put in containers; add liquid honey immediately.
  - Allow for a few days for wax pieces to rise to the top.
  - Check for proper filling height.
- **Creamed Honey**
  - Need 18% moisture.
  - Follow rules on making creamed honey (great resources for this can be found on the Internet).

### **More Information:**

- Use the right honey container. Glass always judges better than plastic.
- Wash containers.
- No dents or marks on lids.

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- No imperfections in jar.
  - No honey on underside of lid.
  - Handle jars so you get no finger prints on jar.
  - Don't turn jar upside down (causing foam).
  - Remove all foam and other floating items from on top of honey.
  - Include labels, but do not put on jar.
  - Fill jars to fill line on jar.
  - Bring an extra jar in case one breaks.
  - Polish jars before entering.
  - Use a nylon cloth to prepare the honey.
  - Make sure it's the weight as listed on rules.
  - Make sure your entry form is mailed in on time and includes all entry fees.
- **Wax**
    - A solar wax melter is a great investment.
    - Keep your lighter and darker wax separate.
    - Strain, strain, strain.
    - Avoid shrinking and cracking of large molds by slow cooling.
    - Candle molds available in many stores; flexible molds work well.
    - Wax can be re-melted.
    - Artwork comes in a variety of forms and is only limited by your imagination and ability.

### ***EQUIPMENT***

- Refractometer – specially designed to determine the percentage of water contained in honey.
- Polariscopes – examines the properties of substances in polarized light; when pure honey is examined with a polariscopes, it will result in a strong left-hand rotation to the plane of polarized light.
- Color analyzer – automatically grades a honey sample's color.
- Appropriate bottles and containers.
- A good light.
- Lint-free towels.
- Copy of the show rules in your work space.

### ***TRANSPORTING/SHIPPING THE ENTRY***

- Your mode of transportation to the event will determine the best way to get your entry there.
- If shipping, make sure it arrives by the deadline date and to the right location. If late, you're out of luck!

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- If shipping, ensure that the carrier knows exactly what is being shipped; many will help you with the packing such that it is secure.
- Always insure your packages. Insurance is reasonably priced and will cover any losses should the package be damaged during shipment.
- If driving, carefully pack your entries.
- Airline travel has greatly limited what can be carried on airplanes, so be mindful of this.
- If flying and you choose to bring your entries in checked baggage, pack them carefully with significant cushioning. Enclose a note in your checked baggage that the items are honey or wax for a national honey show.
- The Honey Show Committee will make efforts to remedy any damages associated with shipping before the entry is judged.
- Judges will overlook any damages related to shipping.

### ***JUDGING***

- **Liquid honey:** density (moisture content); freedom from crystals; cleanliness and freedom from foam; uniformity of color; flavor; container appearance; and accuracy and uniformity of fill.
- **Beeswax:** color; cleanliness; uniformity of appearance; freedom from cracking, shrinkage or bruising; and texture and aroma.
- **Artistic categories:** originality; finishing details; and artistic merit.

### ***ADDITIONAL RESOURCES***

- One of the best resources may be someone in your home state who has participated in a honey show or served as a judge.
- Books
  - *Honey Handbook for Honey Judges and Beekeepers Exhibiting Hive Products* (\$19.99)
  - *The Candle Maker's Companion* (\$18.95)
  - *Wick, Wax and Talk* (\$2)
  - *Basic Candle Making* (\$19.95)
  - *The Honey Wax Instruction Booklet* (\$.75 each)
  - *The Handmade Candle* (\$17.20)
  - *Beeswax Production, Harvesting, Processing and Products* (\$18.95)
- Web Sites
  - Search "Honey Show Preparation"
  - Search "Beeswax Modeling or Beeswax Candle Making"

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### ***OTHER COMMENTS***

- Remember, this is for fun!
- If you have a question as you prepare your entry, don't be afraid to ask.
- You are never too old or too young to participate in this experience.
- It is helpful to enter in a local or state show before bringing your entries forward to a national show.