

Stahlman Beekeeping ***Notes for 2022*** **National Honey** **Month**



Issue 36 September 3, 2022

National Honey Month is a celebratory and promotional event held annually during the month of September in the [United States](#).

Its purpose is to promote [American beekeeping](#), the beekeeping industry, and [honey](#) as a natural and beneficial sweetener.

September is significant for honey producers as it is the month that marks the end of the honey collection season for many beekeepers in the United States.



This is a picture sent to me by Shane Woodruff, a New Jersey beekeeper. He moved bees to the Finger Lake region of New York for a honey crop.

His supers are maxed out, full of honey! He still has a good golden rod flow ahead as you can see in the back of the bee yard. He is faced with extracting these supers and putting them back on the hives for

more honey. This picture was taken last week. Don't we all wish we had a honey location like this!

I took the liberty to copy and paste information from the National Honey Board site. The National Honey Board was founded in 1987 to promote honey sales in the U.S. Many of you may wonder what the National Honey Board is and what it does for beekeepers. I have tried to provide information taken directly from their web site.

The honey R&P program operates as the National Honey Board. The program's purpose is to expand domestic markets for honey and honey products. Assessments are collected on honey and honey products packed or imported into the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. The National Honey Board collects these funds and uses them, under AMS oversight, for research and development, advertising and promotion of honey and honey products, consumer education, and industry information.

The assessment rate is \$0.015 per pound and is collected on domestic honey and honey products from first handlers or packers and on imported honey or honey products by the U.S. Department of

Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection. Packers and importers marketing less than 250,000 pounds of honey per year are exempt from paying assessments.

The program is funded by packers and importers of honey and honey products. The Board conducts generic promotion and market development activities in the United States.

You can see more by visiting: [National Honey Board | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

All Beekeepers can visit their site at [Shop | National Honey Board](#) to get items to promote honey.

The National Honey Board is excited to bring you an improved program and streamlined ordering experience. That said, here are some of the changes you can look forward to:

- *All materials are now offered at no charge.*
- *Customers may place ONE order per year.*
- *\$9.95 Flat rate shipping to the continental United States (excludes AK and HI).*
- *While it may get to you sooner, please allow 3 weeks for delivery of materials.*
- *In a hurry? Many items can be instantly downloaded!*

Examples of what they provide to those who want to take advantage of material:



Honey Bee Stickers

Quantity



Honey Bees Keep The Food World Buzzing Recipe Brochure



What is Pollination Activity Sheet - (Also available for download)



What Do Bees Do Activity Sheet - (Also available for download)



Biology Activity Sheet - (Also available for download)



Inside The Hive Activity Sheet - (Also available for download)



Honey Activity Sheet - (Also available for download)



Bee Inspired - Hang tag

Keep in mind that hobby and small scale honey sales are not required to pay anything to support this program.

Each state in the U.S. has requirements for selling honey. Some require health permits and inspection of the honey bottling area. Many states only require one to meet the Federal standard:

Federal Labeling Requirements

All honey labels in the United States must comply with federal guidelines. While there is no specific federal legislation covering honey labels, legislation pertaining to food labeling must be followed by honey producers.

HONEY

Weight in Ounces and Grams

Name of producer

Address of producer

This is ALL that is legally required for a small producer.

Specifically, federal [Fair Packaging and Labeling Act](#) (FPLA) requires that all “consumer commodities” (including honey) include these elements on their labels:

- Net contents in both ounces/pounds and grams
- Identity of contents
- Name and place of business that manufactured the contents.

Note: If someone can look up the address on the internet, street address does not need to be included.

North Carolina has a higher standard especially for honey labeled as North Carolina honey.

Everything you need to know about honey labels in North Carolina, presented as simply as possible. Labels must follow the relevant federal and state guidelines. [If you want to participate in specific North Carolina programs, such as becoming a Certified Honey Producer or selling honey at NC state farmers markets, you must meet additional label requirements.](#)

Labeling Requirements for Special North Carolina Programs

Effective June 1, 2012, a permit is required to sell honey labeled as “Sourwood” or “North Carolina Honey” at Farmers Markets operated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. To find out more about this program, visit the [NCDA&CS](#) website.

Another North Carolina program – the Certified Honey Producer Program – details even more information that must be included on honey labels. Specifically, to participate in this program, honey labels should:

- Observe the minimum labeling requirements set forth by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- To avoid infant botulism, the CHPP recommends that labels also include a cautionary statement about not feeding honey to infants less than one year old, as advised by the

American Academy of Pediatrics

(see www.aappublications.org/news/2018/11/19/honey111918).

- Make sure the floral source of the honey is accurately represented on the label.
- **Not include the term “organic honey” to describe certified honey.** This is interesting because we see Organic honey on labels in many retail outlets here in North Carolina. The word Organic honey adds extra added cost to the product when in fact all most all honey is not organic and as explained below – much of it is imported Grade A honey. **Let your honey customers know this!**

Honey standards in many countries are more restrictive than what we have in the U.S.

I went to: <https://www.honeytraveler.com/types-of-honey/grading-honey/#>: to learn a bit more about honey standards in the U.S.

USDA Honey Grading

The USDA publishes a grading system for extracted honey that provides general standards for two types of honey;

1. Filtered Honey: all or most of the fine particles, pollen grains, air bubbles, or other materials normally found in suspension, have been removed.
2. Strained Honey: strained to the extent that most of the particles, including comb, propolis, or other defects normally found in honey, have been removed. Grains of pollen, small air bubbles, and very fine particles would not normally be removed.

Characteristics covered by the USDA grading system for Honey: Moisture content, absence of defects, flavor & aroma and clarity (for filtered honey). Color is defined but not part of the calculation of grade. For imported honey that bears USDA grading information, the country of origin must be declared.

Characteristics *Not* covered by the USDA honey grading system:

It is important to note that this is a voluntary system. No enforcement or checking is performed. For that reason and because of the grading system lacking in several key areas, this grading system should never be the only deciding factor in selecting honey. There are many important honey characteristics not covered by the USDA grading system. Two honeys could be legally graded as Grade A honey and be identically labeled as, “100% Organic Clover Honey from Arizona – USDA Grade A” yet be entirely different honeys. They could be a blend of honeys from all over the world, some heated to 180 degrees to make it easy to filter, contain antibiotics, chemicals and corn syrup, not made from Clover at all nor actually be from plants in Arizona! **This is what major retailers sell for ½ the price you charge for your honey.**

Also note that from the USDA Rules and Regulations, “**...honey does not require official inspection in order to carry official USDA grade marks and since there are no existing programs that require the official inspection and certification of honey,...**”

Not covered: Purity or added ingredients (sugar or syrups), heating, contaminants, authenticity of labeling (natural, organic, raw, unheated), biological source (floral, honeydew), botanical source (Arcacia, Clover etc.), or regional source. Many of these factors are defined and followed for honeys from other countries (Europe, Australia,

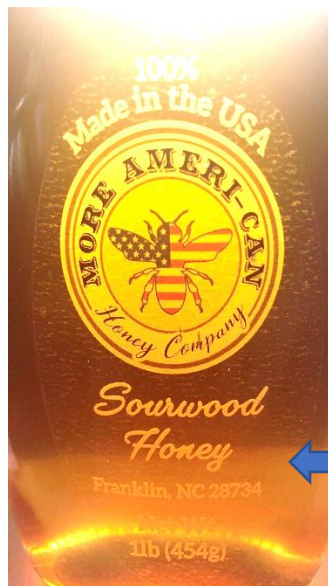
New Zealand) and supported via [honey standards](#) and labeling, but are not part of a grading system per se. **For honey from the United States, the best policy for determining the level of quality is to purchase honey directly from the honey farmer or a trusted distributor or supplier who can vouch for the honey source and processing methods.** It is important to note that some states are now considering enforcing standards for honey produced in their state. Florida is the first state to actually create and enforce a [honey identity standard](#). Other states with honey standards: [California – scroll to Division 13. Bee Management and Honey Production](#). Wisconsin and North Carolina are close to adopting a standard.

USDA Honey Grading Standard

- **U.S. Grade A** is the quality of extracted honey that meets the applicable requirements of Table A and has a minimum total score of 90 points.
- **U.S. Grade B** is the quality of extracted honey that meets the applicable requirements of Table A and has a minimum total score of 80 points.
- **U.S. Grade C** is the quality of extracted honey that meets the applicable requirements of Table A and has a minimum total score of 70 points.

I researched the material and copied it as it is presented on the web. We all need information. I am just passing on what I located.

For the average beekeeper, honey labels are helpful to the person buying honey. We often sell from our home to friends and others that inquire about our honey. The label provides the customer information - who produced, bottled it and the weight. Additional information might indicate location such as local. The season the honey was gathered is helpful (spring, summer, fall). Other labels might contain something like wildflower or Liquid Gold! Often honey is sold as being from a particular plant such as clover.



Many beekeepers are very creative in designing bottle labels.

If a beekeeper is serious about selling honey, remember it is often the label and bottle that sell the honey. Eye appeal is important.



This is a jar of honey produced in 2022 and sold in North Carolina. The honey is a very light color. Note: the made in the U.S.A. and the label is printed directly on the glass bottle. This allows light to pass thru the honey and the label just jumps out and gets attention!