



Northwest New Jersey Beekeepers Association Honey Show Entry Tips

Your goal should be to present the best possible **package and product**. The best-tasting honey does not always win. You will want to pay attention to every detail!

READ! Be sure to read the directions.

- The rules will state the specifics for entering the show.
- If you do not comply with the rules, you could be disqualified before the judging begins.

Entering Honey

1. Jars:

Honey should be presented in one-pound glass jars (Classic Gamber or Queenline). DO NOT use plastic jars.

- You will need to enter three (3) jars each of the same honey for any category you will enter. All three jars should look identical.
 - Categories: Light, Light Amber, Amber, Dark
 - Determine the class you believe your 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 Color Scale and match the colors to the charts.
- Look for and choose the best jars in your inventory.
- 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.

2. Caps:

- Plastic caps do not offer a clean/crisp sound when opening.
- Metal has a nice clean ring to it when opened and are recommended. Listen for the "ring" of the lid when it is removed.
 - The judge will look at the top of your honey jar with a flashlight to check for hair and/or dirt.
 - Be sure your lid is clean. Avoid any dust in the lid. (Details! Details! Details!)
- Placing a piece of plastic wrap between the jar and the cap prior to sealing the lid is no longer recommended. Removing the wrap may cause honey to drip on the bottle. A small amount of honey on the lid will not alter your score.



HONEY ENTRY TIPS continued

3. 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.
- It is better to overfill than underfill the jar.
 - 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 three jars should look consistent. Uniformity of fill is important. Line up your jars to be sure they are each filled to the same height.
- Remove any honey that may have spilled on the jar. You do not want anything sticking to the jars.
- Remove smudges or fingerprints from the jars as well!
 - Points will be lost for jars that are not clean.
 - Shine a flashlight on your filled/capped jars. It will show you any fingerprints you may have missed or not noticed.

4. Taste/Smell:

- The judge is looking for a natural flavor. You want to avoid a burnt or caramelized flavor.



HONEY ENTRY TIPS continued

5. Moisture:

- Honey should be extracted in a dehumidified environment.
- Extracting honey in times of high humidity will pull moisture into it.
- A Refractometer tests the honey for moisture. This will tell the judge the number of points to add or subtract.
 - NWNJBA has a refractometer. Please contact the club if interested in borrowing it.
- Put a toothpick into the jar and take it out. If the honey comes off quickly, there is too much moisture.
 - Jars can be placed in a low temperature oven which will pull the moisture out. Honey can be heated to 100 degrees. It's okay!
- Allow all bubbles to rise to the surface of the jar.
 - Remove any additional bubbles by using a toothpick to pop.

6. Extracting:

- If a frame is 75% capped, you can extract honey from it. No need to wait until the frame is fully capped. To test, strongly shake the frame. If honey does not shake out, it can be removed.
- DO NOT let your honey sit for three to four days before extracting. You want to extract it right away! (You want to avoid moisture, small hive beetles, and wax moths.)
- NWNJBA has two extractors available to borrow. Contact the club if you would like to borrow an extractor.

7. Transporting the Honey to the Show:

- If you have the box that your honey jars came in, this is a good way to transport your honey.
 - Some like to place each individual jar in a clean sock in the box to transport it.
- Place your name, address, and phone number on the box. Do NOT label the honey jars.
- Don't forget to pick up your honey at the end of the fair.
 - Value your product!

8. Polariscope: (Light Box)

- This item is used by the judge when evaluating your honey and will pick up any defect in the honey. It will enable the judge to see crystals, wax, pollen, etc. that may be in the honey.



Other Items That May Be Entered

Be sure to READ the rules for these items as well.

Section Honey and Cut Comb: 3 containers

- Three Ross Round sections with clear plastic lids.
- Three 4 to 4 ½ inch clear, square plastic containers. (Do NOT use clam shell boxes)
- Total weight of entry shall be at least 1 pound but no more than 1 ½ pounds.
- Graded on cut, cleanliness, dryness of cappings, and uniformity.
- Uniformity includes color of honey, thickness of comb, capping structure, and weight.
- You want to avoid uncapped cells, pollen, crushed wax, and crystallization.
- Cut comb should have a cookie-cutter uniformity.

Creamed Honey: 3 jars

- Jars must be round or hex clear glass.
- Must contain at least 12 but no more than 16 ounces of honey.
- Graded on fineness of crystals, uniformity and firmness, cleanliness, fill, flavor, and freedom from foam.

Chunk Honey: 3 jars

- Jars must be round, clear, glass. (No Hex jars.)
- Use a wide mouth jar. You want the comb in the center of the jar.
- Must contain at least 12 but no more than 16 ounces of honey by weight.
- Graded on neatness of cut. You want clean cuts that are all the same size. Judge is looking for parallel cuts with NO ragged edges.
- Cleanliness, dryness of cappings, uniformity of appearance, and density are taken into consideration.



OTHER ITEM ENTRY TIPS continued

Frame of Honey

- Must be displayed in wooden or plastic display case, which has both sides made of clear glass or plastic.
- All four corners of frame need to be secured within the display case.
- Frame will be judged on uniformity, absence of uncapped cells, and/or watery cappings.
- Frame of honey should be cleaned of wax and/or propolis
- Entries are judged by:
 - White caps
 - All cells filled and capped
 - No honey dripping down
 - A uniform frame of similar color honey
 - No pollen or granulation
 - Display container that shows the entire frame

Mead

- All entries must have been produced by member using honey from the member's own bees, by means of fermentation.
- Dry, Sweet, and Made with Fruit Juice entries should be contained in one clear non-frosted bottle, containing 750 mL or 25.4 fl. oz.
- Natural cork, plastic stoppers, or screw-top closures are all acceptable.
- Sparkling Mead entries must be in a Champagne-type clear glass bottle.

Beeswax Block

- One pound block
- Pure beeswax
- Optimum color is lemon yellow.
- Should be cleaned properly.
- Presented on solid base (wood or cardboard) with no larger than a one-inch margin.
- Entries should be covered with clear plastic wrap.
- Entries judged by cleanliness, uniformity of appearance, color, aroma, and absence of cracks and shrinkage. (Be sure bottom of wax is clean.)



OTHER ITEM ENTRY TIPS continued

Beeswax Tapers

- One pair, poured or dipped, taper candles.
- Minimum height of 8 inches.
- Must consist of pure beeswax with NO additives or colorings except wicks.

Novelty Beeswax

- Either:
 - A single item of any size, any shape, pure beeswax.
 - A coordinated set of 3 IDENTICAL items of any size, any shape, pure beeswax.
- No wicks.
- May be colored, decorated, fragranced, and/or painted. May contain non-beeswax components/decorations..

Novelty Beeswax Candles

- Either:
 - A single candle of any size, any shape, pure beeswax.
 - A coordinated set of 3 IDENTICAL candles of any size, any shape, pure beeswax.
- May be colored, decorated, dyed, and/or painted.

Hand Cream/Lotion: 3 jars

- Jars may be either glass, plastic, or tin.
- Containers must be uniform in weight.
- Minimum weight of 1.5 ounces by weight of product.
- Made by member from scratch.
- Must contain member's own beeswax and/or honey.
- Scent may be added to the product or may be left in its natural state.
- Use of ready-made cream and lotion bases is NOT permitted.
- Judged on consistency and texture of product, cleanliness, uniformity of size/fill from container to container, container appearance, and fragrance.



OTHER ITEM ENTRY TIPS continued

Soap: 3 bars

- Bars must weigh at least 3 ounces each.
- Made from scratch by member using member's own beeswax and/or honey.
- No labels placed around/on bars.
- Soap will be judged on appearance, uniformity of bars, fragrance, hardness, and quality of curing. (You want to avoid a greasy product.)

Lip Balm: 3 containers

- Tins, tubs, or tubes must contain at least 0.15 ounces of product by weight.
- Made from scratch by member using member's own beeswax and/or honey.
- Practicality of packaging along with ease of opening is taken into consideration.
- Judged on consistency and texture of product, cleanliness, uniformity of filling, container appearance, and fragrance.

Photography (With Person and Without)

- Photos should measure no smaller than 5" X 7" with a maximum size of 8"x 10".
- Each photo must be mounted or matted.
- Mat or mounting board should extend at least 1 inch beyond the print on all sides.
- NO frames are permitted.
- Only one photo from each category per membership may be entered (one photo with person/one photo without).
- Photo must be taken by the person entering.
- Photo must include a honey bee.
- Photographs will be judged on composition, treatment of subject matter, quality of photography, and presentation.

Best in Show: Judge determines best item exhibited

Best Exhibitor: the exhibitor who enters the most items

Enjoy, Have Fun, and Good Luck!