

## GUIDELINES to entering a Honey Competition

### - The Entry Form Made Easy-

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#### INTRODUCTION

All the information required by an enquiring exhibitor can be found on the Entry Form with Rules and Regulations. There will be details stipulated in the Regulations, take your time with this document, read through all the Categories and Classes of entries available, and pay attention to the T's & C's, as different competitions may vary their specifications.

There are a wide range of entries possible, sometimes the descriptions are unfamiliar to someone entering an event for the first time, I hope this becomes a user-friendly guide for the reader to discover what to know, and how to optimize their entries.

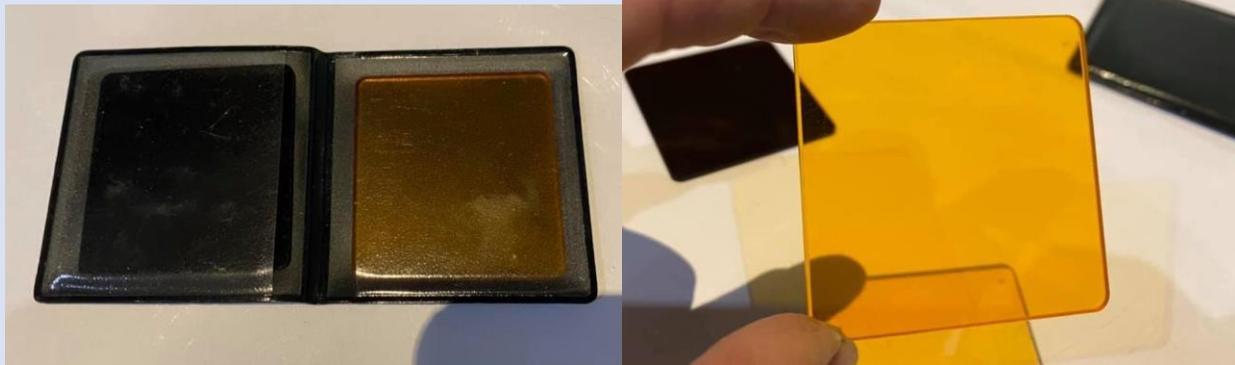
#### CLASSES OF ENTRIES

Categories and Classes of entries are described as follows:

- 1) Liquid Honey** – a “runny honey” that would be poured into a bottle. (Varying honeys from varying foraging sources, seasons, environments, will have very different densities, from thin to thick, this class pertains to honeys of a liquid nature.)  
Liquid Honeys are found in a wide range of **colours**, from very Light, through Medium on to Dark. Hence the entry form will specify  
**Liquid Honey Light**  
**Liquid Honey Medium**  
**Liquid Honey Dark**

Usually, 3x bottles are required per entry, please check the entry form. If an entrant is unsure whether their honey is Light or Medium, and which category to enter it into, one can ask the Chief Steward (CS) to assist when delivering the entry, so that it gets correctly placed. Even if “Light” is submitted on the entry form, and then – on delivery and communication with the CS - the entry needs to move into another class, that should not disqualify nor penalize an exhibitor. These changes are made before Staging, and the CS uses competition Colour-grading glasses to discern subtle differences in the colours of Liquid Honey.

*Photos of Colour-grading glasses:*



- 2) Select Liquid Honey** – these mono-floral honeys pertain to the unique hive harvest on specific foraging, e.g., Macadamia honey (harvested when the bees have been placed into the Macadamia orchards, where they are utilized to pollinate the crop). Similarly, hives are transported to sites with proliferating Aloe, Citrus/Orange Blossom, Litchi, Marula, Avocado, and harvested after their flowering is over. Beekeepers may choose sites (or be fortunate to have access to) that are dominated by a certain trees and vegetation, such as *Scutia myrtina* (Drogie), *Acacia melliodora* (Swarthaak), *Eucalyptus sideroxylin* (Black Iron Bark), *Ziziphus mucronata* (Buffalo Thorn), *Faurea saligna* (Boekenhout), *Eucalyptus saligna* (Saligna Gum honeys), and of course the exceptional African biodiversity lends itself to a multitude of Select honeys, of which only a few are mentioned here.

Usually 3x bottles per entry, check the entry form.

- 3) Granulated Honey** – crystallized honey, honey that was liquid and now has become more solid by the presence of naturally-formed crystals. Exactly as with the Liquid honeys, these can be lighter to darker in colour, and the competitions usually offer entries into Light and Medium classes. For entry purposes, fill these bottles as you would fill the liquid honey bottles (Bottle fill levels shown in detail later in this document.)

Usually 3x bottles per entry, check the entry form.

#### **Granulated Light & Granulated Medium**

- 4) Soft-set Honey** – formerly known as Creamed honey. No dairy is involved, hence the name change. However, this honey is carefully prepared by “creaming” it into a soft-set state, not liquid yet not granulated. A common

mistake on entries is when “Creamed” is entered and it is simply a granulating honey. There is a significant difference between Soft-set and Granulated honeys. When tipping the bottle of a soft-set honey, a smooth soft ‘tongue” should slowly start to pour/tip out of the bottle. By comparison, granulation is the natural process of crystallizing honey, and it is fixed and firm in the bottle. Usually, 3x bottles per entry (check the entry form).

- 5) **Chunk Honey** – a well-cut slender piece of comb is placed into a bottle of liquid honey **of the same origin**. The comb and liquid honey should be from the exact same source. The length of the cut comb should measure from the neck of the jar to the bottom of the bottle, and the width to be slightly less than the diameter of the bottle neck.

Usually, 3x bottles per entry.

- 6) **Comb Honey** – cleanly-cut single pieces of comb meeting a certain weight usually 250g per cut block, or a specified 7X10cm piece of comb, placed in a clear clean punnet. The container should seal / be in a punnet that has a lid. Usually, 3x punnets per entry (check the specific requirements on the Entry form).

- 7) **Frames – Super frame, or Top bar frame.**

One frame, carefully selected, and as much as possible, ideally have the comb filling the whole frame. The bur comb, propolis, or debris, can be gently scraped off the wood with a hive tool, or a hardware paint-scraper, to tidy up the presentation of the frame.

Ideal presentation of a Super frame should have the comb evenly distributed across the frame, be fully capped, of a single source, in a tidied-up frame. (Mixed foraging sources show different honey colours when shining a light through the comb.)

Again, please check the entry form requirements as to which type of frame to enter.

- 8) **Beeswax.** Single solid tidy block of beeswax, also entered in colour **Light** or **Medium**. Standard exhibit should not be less than 1.2kg in weight, and not less than 50mm in thickness. Can be round, square, rectangular, if the mentioned criteria on weight and thickness are met.

Check the specifications on the Entry form.

- 9) **Creative Wax** – Awaiting your creativity! Anything from wax candles (all shapes, sizes, designs) to creative masterpieces (any size, shape, form). Criteria being that the exhibit is created from pure beeswax. Follow the specific regulations on the competition forms,

**10) Labels & Packaging** – Entry requires 2x bottles, one labelled bottle filled with honey, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> bottle without honey/empty, with the same label. This class allows any size and shape of bottle, whether glass or plastic, (provided they are the same in that entry).

## TIPS & GUIDELINES

- 1) Pay attention to the Dates**, especially to **the closing date** for entries. This is the paperwork that needs to be submitted on time. You may not have your actual bottles / frames / entries ready yet, or even be certain what you may have available – **submit the entry form on time**, and you can communicate changes with the Chief Steward later. So please note the **date of close of entries**, and that **No late entries** will be accepted.
- 2) Who or what is the Chief Steward?** Amongst the many tasks, this is the person responsible for organizing, receiving, collating, all the exhibits for the competition, and you will be corresponding with them via email or phone. Note their **contact details**. You can email your queries, seek information, and request assistance from the Chief Steward. Entry details should never be discussed with the Judges, (that would compromise their neutrality), but you can discuss details with the Chief Steward.
- 3) If you cannot deliver your entries yourself**, in person or via someone else, they **can be couriered** to the event, and you need to **communicate with the Chief Steward** to make these arrangements. Plan this well in advance.
- 4) There will be specific information on the form about what type of bottle(s), with which colour lid (s)**, to be used for the competition. There will be a photo / diagram included, showing bottles and lids, and another to guide you further about the **fill level** for liquid honeys, granulated and creamed honeys.
- 5) Here's the photo and diagram for the standard correct fill level for liquid, granulated, and soft-set ('creamed') honeys.** The fill level = how full your bottle should be! For the highly competitive entries, there is great care taken neither to **underfill** nor **overfill** an entry. This will be noticed by the Judges when they are looking at the **Presentation** of your entry.



Above is the regarded standard choice of bottle, with a silver or gold lid, for a honey competition. This is a 500g clear glass bottle, sold with a choice of colours for lids. The photo above shows the correct fill level for a honey entry.

**Understanding that availability of bottles may vary for the upcoming 20-24 March 2023 African Regional Apimondia Symposium Honey & Mead Competition, herewith the choice of bottles, bottle sizes, and lids, for ARAS2023.**

**Each Honey entry (Liquid / Soft set / Granulated / Chunk) is to be**

- 3x bottles of the same product per entry
- Ideally 3x 500g clear glass, or clear plastic, bottles with screw top
- Lids may be silver or gold, or any colour if neither silver nor gold can be sourced, provided that all 3 bottles in the entry have the same colour lids
- Bottle sizes may be 375g or 500g or 750g clear glass, or clear plastic, bottles, provided that all 3 bottles with lids are the same in the entry

- 6) Liquid, Granulated, and Soft-set (“Creamed”) honeys: **usually 3x bottles required per entry**, please **check the entry form**, this information is always specified.

An exhibitor can enter multiple entries, if each entry (of 3x bottles) comes from a different source. Therefore, one beekeeper can enter many entries, in all classes, provided each entry is unique and not repeated in that class.

- 7) **Bottle selection.** Choices will be specified in the entry form. Regardless, follow the same preparation advice:

Select the closer-to-perfect bottles, without blemishes nor faults (bubbles, scratches, in the glass or plastic) and ensure they are washed, clean, dry, and shiny! Select the matching lids as carefully, no scratches nor dents, and ensure all the lids match each other (sometimes the shades differ subtly). Check the inside of the lids carefully too.

**\*Tip\*** Over time, put aside the best bottles and lids! This becomes really useful for a competition!

- 8) **Bottle Fill.** The fill level is clearly demonstrated in the photos above. Fill to the full round ridge that marks the bottom of screwing the lid on. **Reason?** Having measured this, this fill marks the exact 500g honey content in the bottle.

**\*Tips\*** After pouring the honey into a warmed-up bottle, let it settle to bring any bubbles or fine debris/foam/bee parts/wax to the top. The benefit of filling pre-warmed bottles may help to also limit bubbles clinging to the side and get further bubbles and light debris to float to the surface expediently. This debris can be removed carefully with a teaspoon (dipped in a mug of hot water, the tsp that is), or draw the debris off with a little cling-wrap placed across the surface.

Another suggestion is to overfill the bottle when pouring, so that the remaining cleaned-up honey is then reduced to the correct fill-level, this becomes a fine art! As fussy as this sounds, it becomes the difference between the 2<sup>nd</sup> place and winning Champion Bottle on Show!

Of course, the honey taste is everything, but presentation of entries is carefully judged!

- 9) The exhibitor may provide extra lids with the entries, requesting that the stewards replace the existing lids with the unblemished clean ones. This is useful when entries are either couriered to the event or delivered by anyone other than the exhibitor in person.

- 10) There can be no labels, no identifying marks, no markers, whatsoever, placed directly onto any bottle, frame, exhibit. On delivery, ensure the receiving CS has all the necessary details and information, and place information inside the delivering boxes, but never on to the actual exhibit. (For example, No small drops

of nail polish on the bottom of the bottle.) The reason is simple: all entries are anonymous, so as never to prejudice, compromise, nor influence the judges in any way. The entries are identified and numbered by the CS, referenced against a Catalogue of Entries. Should a personal marker be discovered, the entry will be disqualified.

Should there be branded markers on frames, these can be covered with masking tape for judging. Draw attention to the CS, so there is no misunderstanding.

**11)What is Staging?** After receiving the entries and exhibits, the CS will assist and instruct the attending stewards to place all the exhibits correctly, in their classes and categories, ready for the judges. Everything is numbered, so there are no personal identifications, and only the CS has the file containing the information that correlates the exhibit number to the exhibitor.

Hence, all entries are Received upon delivery, then Staged (exhibited to be judged), then judged).

*Staged Liquid honeys, and Frames, on the Honey Trees*

