**CCHBA Honey Contest Rules**

# **Purpose**

The purpose of the annual CCHBA Honey Contest is to promote friendly competition and fellowship among members. This is a great way for club members to practice extracting and preparing their honey and see how their honey measures up to others in their area. This is also a great opportunity to get some practice and feedback before the honey contest for State Fair.

# **Categories**

The following categories will be judged during the annual CCHBA Honey Contest:

1. Dark Amber
2. Light Amber
3. Amber
4. Light White Honey
5. Chunk
6. Comb
7. Creamed

# **Rules**

The following lists the rules for participation in the annual CCHBA honey contest:

* There is a fee of $3.00 per entry (scholarship students get one entry free). Fees are collected to help purchase additional honey judging equipment, paperwork, ribbons, and Thank You gifts for judges.
* The honey contest is open to any active CCHBA member.
* All honey must be from a CCHBA member’s own apiary and from the current year’s honey crop.
* Each family membership can submit one entry, per category.
* Jars and boxes for the different categories of honey will be available at the June and July meetings (for $1 each).
* Entries should have no identifying labels or markers. A coded tab will be affixed to the entry when submitted.
* Judging cards will be used to determine scores; scores and decisions are final.
* First, Second and Third prize ribbons are awarded for each category and a Best of Show ribbon is awarded for the best honey overall.
* Color grades are determined by the Honey Contest Committee, whose decision is final.
* Entries must be brought to August club meeting.
* Ribbons will be presented at September club meeting.

# **Additional Information**

The following lists some additional information about how to prepare your honey for the annual CCHBA honey contest:

***In the Bee Yard***

* Do NOT Over Smoke Your Hives or scorch your honey with the uncapping knife
* Use as few chemicals as possible. NEVER... during honey flow! Includes harvesting chemicals that make the bees leave the hive. Even though they may be nontoxic, leaving them on too long can flavor the honey
* Harvest before “Snow on the Prairie” blooms
* Do NOT harvest uncapped honey. It will ferment and cause intestinal problems and it will lower your “density” score.

***What You Will Need***

* One-pound queenline glass jars. Inspect jars for imperfections especially bubbles in glass. Purchase extra jars so you can select from your best fill.
* New/Clean Filters Silk Fabric Tulle or Nylon Mesh (fabric used in tutus) Do NOT Use Cheesecloth as a Filter! Cotton fibers in your honey will spoil your entry. The shape of ladies’ new nylon knee socks makes filtering less messy.
* Easy-pour Pitcher
* Clean, Lint-free Gloves • Cotton •Rubber • Nitrile
* Spoons, flashlight, small cardboard box, (Extra) clean lids and someone to drive (while you hold the box) Please go to the CCHBA website presentation to see pictures of properly filled queenline jar <http://members.cchba.org/resources/CCHBA_HONEY_CONTEST_Slide_Presentation.pdf>

***The Process***

* Fill your contest jars as early after harvest as possible. This gives bubbles time to float to the top of the jar.
* Put warm filtered honey into clean warm jars. Warming the honey speeds up the process of debris separation and makes filtering the honey easier and faster and decreases the number of bubbles attached to the glass.
* After extraction, set the honey bucket in the sun for 3-5 days. Wax, bee parts, and bubbles will float to the surface.

***When Ready to Fill the Jars*** - Timing is important!

* Take the tops off the one-pound size queenline jars and run the jars (not the lids) through the dishwasher.
* While the jars are in the dishwasher, put a new fine mesh nylon knee sock onto an easy-pour pitcher.
* When the dishwasher nears the end of the dry cycle, bring the honey bucket in out of the sun.
* Fill the pitcher with sun warmed honey.
* Hang the knee sock and let the warm honey drain through.
* Using gloves, remove a single hot jar from the dishwasher and use the pitcher to fill it with warm filtered honey. Then do the next, leaving the rest of the jars in the dishwasher to stay warm until ready to fill.

***Fill Line***—The one-pound glass queenline contest jar has a “fill line”!

* Overfill and then cover your contest jars
* Set jars aside until a couple days before the contest. During this “sit” time, bubbles will rise to the surface. Creating “sit time” is the reason you need to prepare your entries ASAP after harvest.
* Use the spoons to remove the froth. Use a practice jar first. Try not to make more bubbles. Don’t double dip the spoon. Remove enough honey so level is just even with top of fill line.
* Use a flashlight to inspect your entries for bubbles and debris.
* Remembering the Scorecard Criteria, select your best 3 jars.
* Wipe down if necessary.
* Box them up and bring extra lids.
* Keep the box level and try not to jiggle.
* Remember not to touch the jar as you submit it. Handle only by the top. Use a clean dish towel or gloves if you prefer, to touch the glass. A clean sock will also work.
* For cut comb, creamed, and chunk categories the scoring is similar.
* Entries should be clean inside and out, full, and free of bubbles, insect parts or debris.
* There should be no smoke, chemical or scorched flavors.
* Perfect density will be 16.6% moisture.

# **Notification**

The Honey Contest Committee is responsible for notifying the club no more than 2 months and no fewer than 1 month prior to the submission date (August).

The membership of CCHBA will be notified as follows:

* A June and/or July article in the Beeline, the monthly club newsletter
* A slide in the June and/or July meeting slideshow
* An announcement during the June and/or July club meeting

# **Honey Contest Committee**

The Honey Contest Committee will be responsible for the following with regards to the annual CCHBA honey contents:

* Notifying membership as detailed in the Notification section
* Ordering jars for sale at the June and July meetings, as follows:
  + 1 lb Queenline jars for liquid honey

In the past, the Queenline jars have been ordered from John Talbert and sold to members for $1.

* + 12 oz jars (about 5.5”-6” tall, similar to an olive jar) for chunk honey.

In the past, the chunk honey containers have been ordered from Shawn Smith and sold to members for $1.

* + 4 oz plastic boxes for cut comb honey

In the past, the cut comb honey containers have been ordered from Shawn Smith and sold to members for $1.

* + Hex jars for creamed honey

In the past, the hex jars have been ordered from Shawn Smith and sold to the members for $1.

* Ordering white gloves (if necessary) for volunteers to handle the honey and for judges. Typically, white cotton gloves are used but latex gloves can be used instead.
* Organizing the judging at the August club meeting. This includes, but is not limited to:
  + Selecting the judges and notifying them of their duties. For information about judging the annual CCHBA honey contest, see the Judging section.
  + Securing a room for judging during the August club meeting. For more information, contact Judy Buckner.
  + Providing all the materials for judging:
    - Three pairs of white gloves (one for each judge) plus extra for volunteers
    - Refractometer to measure moisture content
    - Paper towels
    - Water bottles
    - Polariscope to check for lint, bubbles, and fingerprints.

In the past, this has been provided by John Talbert.

* + - Stickers for entries and registration list.
    - Notepad
    - Pens/ pencils/ markers
    - Dixie cups
    - Saltine crackers (unsalted)
    - Coffee beans (to smell)
    - Plastic stands/ labels for categories (7)
    - Straws to taste honey or toothpicks?
    - Money bag (with $20 in change)
    - Scoring sheets – coversheet plus three sheets per entry per judge (300 score sheets, 100 cover sheets)
    - Paperclips
    - Rubber bands
    - Stapler
    - Scissors
    - Calculators (4)
    - Tablecloth (for September meeting to hide the entries/ribbons)
    - Fingertip cleaner and alcohol (for refractometer)
    - Boxes to hold honey and towels for cushioning
    - Spectrometer for honey color classification training and category.

In the past, this has been provided by Mary-Ann Allen. We have decided that it takes too much time to classify honey with the spectrometer. A chosen volunteer (usually the Honey Princess) is responsible for classifying honey and whatever category she determines will be used for judging. Her decision is final.

* + Purchasing the ribbons
    - First, Second, and Third place for each category (plan for 16 ribbons if tie)

In the past, the ribbons have been ordered from All About Stitches in McKinney.

* + - Best of Show ribbon with trophy

In the past, John Talbert has ordered the trophy from Browning in Garland. It is clear acrylic Lucite with a honey golden base ($35-$45).

* Announcing the winners and handing out ribbons at the September meeting
  + Bring table cloth to cover honey and ribbons
  + Any entries can be swapped or donated to the State Fair Honey Booth
* Keeping records of participation in the contest
* Updating documentation as required

# **Submission Process (August Meeting)**

The Honey Contest Committee should arrive early to the August meeting to set up a table (near the name tag table) to collect entries. For each entrant:

* The entry fee is collected
* The entrant is given the opportunity to wipe down their jar and/or change lids
* The Honey Contest Committee adds a sticker (with a number) to the lid and writes down the number and the entrant name on the master list. The master list must be kept secret and not shown to any judges.
* The Honey Contest Committee will take possession of the entry being careful not to get any fingerprints on the jar (by wearing gloves) and not to tilt the jar in any way.
* A helper (typically the Honey Princess) will take the jars to the judging room and determine color and category. These decisions are final. The helper will be careful not to get any fingerprints on the jar (by wearing gloves) and not to tilt the jar in any way.
* Entries will not be accepted after 6:30pm on the night of the meeting.

# **Judging**

Three judges will be chosen for the annual CCHBA honey queen contest from the current CCHBA membership. All judges should meet the following requirements:

* Be familiar with the beekeeping industry
* Be able to taste the differences in all types of honey
* Not be a current participant in the contest

Honey will be judged for the following attributes:

* Color and category will be determined by Honey Contest Committee, whose determination is final.
* Perfect density (16.6% moisture) using the refractometer results.
* Clean entries, inside and out, full, and free of bubbles, insect parts, or debris using the polariscope results.
* No smoke, chemical, or scorched flavors. Judges will not assess the flowers that the honeybees choose for nectar.
* No fermentation.

Typically, judges are picked from the following list:

* The current CCHBA Honey Queen
* Skip Talbert
* Kurt Kaufman
* Kim Townsend
* Tom Fris
* Doug Buchanan
* The Pettibons
* Shirley Acevedo
* Bradfield
* Janet Row

The current CCHBA Honey Princess oversees operating the refractometer to check moisture content. This gives her the opportunity to experience the judging process, so she can be a judge in the Texas State Fair Honey Contest and the following year.

After the judges score sheets have been double- or triple-checked, awards for each category are determined (1st, 2nd, and 3rd). The entrant with the highest score (over all categories) will be awarded the Best of Show. The winner’s name must be given to John Talbert immediately, so he can get the trophy made in time for the September meeting.

# **Awards (September Meeting)**

The Honey Contest Committee should arrive to the meeting early (before anyone else) to set up the table with the entries and awards. A tablecloth will be used to hide the awards until they are announced during the meeting.