

HONEY AND BEESWAX COMPETITIONS

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Know the show rules and judging criteria.

Every country, state fair or association competition has its own set of classes and rules for entry.

Obtain fair book or show rules before preparing entries.

Respect rules and entry times.

Look your score card over carefully and see where you can improve your entries.

For honey:

Select new jars and new, unblemished lids for liquid, creamed (crystallized) and chunk honey. Select new, unscratched containers for cut-comb and round section.

Jars should be washed, preferably in dishwasher and allowed to air dry. Never dry honey jars with a towel.

If labels are required, put them on straight.

Strain honey at least twice: first strain from the extractor through net (coarse straining) then through finely woven cloth. Never strain through cheesecloth bought at hardware stores or supermarkets. The best straining material is 100% nylon or polyester bought at a fabric store and washed before using. Strain warm honey for best results.

Extract, strain, settle, skim, bottle, then freeze until time for competition. This will retard formation of crystals. Fill from center of settling tank to minimize debris.

Overfill extracted and chunk honey jars, allow to settle, then skim off bubbles and foam. Drain cut-comb well. Catch drippings, strain and bottle.

Select matching cut-comb pieces for number of pieces required. Cut the comb for chunk honey to fill jar side-to-side and top to bottom.

If you have made creamed honey (crystallized), do not let it go above 80°F in storage or it will get soupy. Store in a cool place. If your creamed honey at room temperature is as hard as concrete or completely soupy, don't enter it.

Frames of honey should be exhibited in clean, well-made cases.

For beeswax:

Do not overheat beeswax; it should retain its aroma. Overheating will also cause shrinkage upon cooling.

Use only cappings wax for blocks and candles. Color is important.

Strain beeswax through old sweatshirt material, rough side up. This material will remove the fine, dark debris.

Cool blocks of beeswax and candles slowly to minimize cracking.

Candle bottoms and wicks should be finished correctly.

Wrap blocks of beeswax and other beeswax products, such as candles, immediately upon finishing to prevent specks of dirt adhering and scratches from fingernails.