



The Scottish Beekeepers' Association

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SBA Technical Data Sheet no. 25

Seeding Honey

Seeding Honey to Produce a Fine Crystal Set Honey

There is a market requirement for set honey.

All liquid honeys will eventually set but honeys high in fructose (e.g. Lime) often set with a rather coarse crystal which is not so pleasant on the tongue.

Professor Elton Dyce of Cornell University researched and developed the seeding process in 1928. He found that by carefully controlling the crystallization process temperature to 14 Celsius and starting with a wholly liquified honey and a fine crystal seeding honey, he could produce a fine set honey. At this temperature, the bulk honey crystallizes by copying the size and shape of the seeding honey crystals.

Process:

Bulk Honey

Liquify the bulk honey at 50 to 52C to melt all coarse crystals and filter through a 200 micron cloth into a bucket containing a honey gate.

Allow to cool to 30C

Seeding Honey

Using a fine crystal set honey such as Canola (Oil Seed Rape) or Clover, at a quantity of 10% of the bulk honey, warm to 30C but take care not to melt this seeding honey as the crystallization process is dependent on replicating the crystal size of the seeding honey.

Mixing

Add the seeding honey to the bulk honey and stir thoroughly to mix but avoid entraining or incorporating air as much as possible. Leave at 25C for 24hrs to allow air bubbles to come to the top.

Crystallization

You can now jar the honey and place the jars on a level surface in a room at 14C. Within one week the honey should have crystallised. Store, ideally at 10C.

However by jarring and crystallising in the jar some frosting (streaks or areas of white crystals) will often appear on the side of the jar.

If you want to avoid this frosting, allow the seeded honey to crystallize at 14C in the mixing bucket. When completely set, warm the honey to 25C, again avoiding any liquifying of the set honey, and stir briefly to break up the mass of the honey in order to allow it to pour and be jarred. Leave for 24hrs at 25C to allow any bubbles to come to the top. The set honey can now be jarred with no risk of frosting streaks appearing in the jars.