

Advice: Honey Section, Summer 2026

Your entries don't need to be perfect. Don't be afraid, just 'have a go'!

The more entries the better the show.

➤ Check that your entries comply with all the requirements mentioned in the schedule.

➤ All honey and wax must be bona fide produce of your own bees, apart from in class 103: Local Honey Muffins.

➤ Please don't hesitate to ask the Show Secretary if there is anything that you don't understand.

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Judging Honey:

➤ Many thanks to Julie Cockle and Val Vivian-Griffiths for their help preparing this guidance.

➤ As with all other showing classes, presentation is a very important aspect when showing honey. The guidelines below will show how honey is judged and why one jar of honey could be chosen over another.

➤ Please don't let these guidelines put you off entering your honey. It is very common for complete beginners entering for the first time to win prizes with their honey.

Honey jars

➤ The correct sized jar (**340g** (12oz, approx. 300ml) **or over**) should be used and filled to the correct level.

For example, with a correctly filled one pound jar, there wouldn't be any light showing between the honey and the rim of the lid when the jar is held up.

When filling 12oz hexagonal jars the honey level will be below the bottom rim of the lid, with light seen between the lid and the honey.

➤ The jar should be undamaged and clean with no fingerprints.

➤ The lid (screw or twist) should be intact, undented and clean.

➤ Exhibitor cards will be provided during exhibit staging. No other labels shall be allowed on the honey jars.

Clear run honey

➤ Classified as **light run** or as **medium or dark run** by checking its colour against grading glasses. Please contact the Show Secretary in advance of the Show if you need help classifying your honey.

➤ Run honey should be clear with no bits of debris, bee body parts, granules or bubbles. Shine a torch under and through the jar of honey to check for clarity and/ or debris.

➤ When the lid is opened there should be a good honey aroma. There should be no dust, scum or bubbles on the surface of the honey.

➤ The honey should have a water content of no more than 20%. The viscosity of the honey will give an indication of this and a refractometer can be used to check it.

➤ Aroma and flavour of the honey are most important - there should be no external flavours or odours. However, taste is subjective and will be based on the personal preference of the judge.

Naturally granulated or soft-set honey

- Soft set honey will be judged on the same criteria as run honey.
- Unwanted bits in soft set honey tend to drop to the bottom of the jar and can be seen from underneath. Shine a torch under and through the jar of honey to check for clarity and/ or debris.
- Aroma and flavour of the honey are most important - there should be no external flavours or odours. However, taste is subjective and will be based on the personal preference of the judge.
- The consistency of soft set honey should be of a buttery texture and not move when the jar is laid on its side.

'Black jar' of honey

- Any type of honey, judged solely on taste and smell. There should be no external flavours or odours.
- The sides of the jar may be covered in any way such that the honey can not be seen.

Local Honey Muffins

- Must be made according to the **set recipe on page 45 of the schedule**.
- Recipe makes 12 to 14 muffins but may be scaled up or down to suit.
- **Direct like-for-like replacements may be used to avoid specific allergens.** For example, gluten-free flour or vegan yoghurt instead of sour cream. Please note any changes next to your bake.
- **Honey must be sourced from the Forest of Dean or surrounding areas.** The origin of your honey should be listed next to your bake. **Title cards** are available from the steward if necessary or use the back of your **exhibitor card**.
- The majority of marks will be awarded for flavour and aroma. No off-flavours/ odours and no hint of staleness.
- All ingredients should be well mixed and evenly distributed.
- Well risen and evenly baked. No burned edges or uncooked middles.
- No raising agent tunnels. No large air bubbles nor crumbling edges.
- **No cooling rack marks** on the top of your buns.
- Displayed on a plain plate, doily optional.
- Protected by a transparent covering, such as a cake dome or clingfilm.