Labeling, Marketing and Selling Honey

For the Small Scale Beekeeper

By Michelle Gasaway

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association
Labels and Bottles

- LABELS: Bee Creative, Clear and Custom
- Follow State guidelines – Senate Bill 1766 – eff. 9/1/15
- BOTTLES:
  - Plastic weighs less than glass
  - Shop around for the best price (including lids)
    - Consider a group order to get discounts
  - Offer various sizes to reach more customers
  - Decide what shape you like best and be consistent in your offerings
  - Mason Jars – economical and nostalgic
Agriculture Code Title 6, Subtitle A, Chapter 131

Subchapter E. Labeling and Sale of Honey

Sec.131.081- 131.084

Internet search: Ag Code 131
A person may not label, sell, or keep, offer, or expose for sale a product....

- as “Honey” unless the product consists exclusively of “Pure Honey”
- that resembles” Honey” that is labeled with a picture or drawing of bee, beehive or comb unless it’s “Pure Honey”
- resembles “Honey” and is labeled as “Imitation Honey” (no such thing as IMITATION HONEY!)
- that consists of “Honey” mixed with another ingredient unless:
  - the product contains an “Ingredient Label”
  - the word “Honey” appears in the list of ingredients in the same size print and location

***Disclaimer: This is a summary, not word for word of Ag Code 131***
A Bill to be Entitled an Act relating to exemptions from certain regulations for small honey production operations.

- small honey production operation
  - less than 2,500 pounds PER YEAR
  - selling of honey must be done by the beekeeper and/or immediate family
- only sells or distributes honey or honeycomb:
  - produced in Texas
  - owned and managed by the beekeeper
  - that is pure honey (raw and not blended with any other product)
➢ sells directly to consumer
  ➢ From Beekeeper’s home
  ➢ At a farmer’s market
  ➢ At a farm stand
  ➢ municipal, county, or non-profit fair, festival or event
  ➢ AND deliver the honey to the consumer at the point of sale or another location designated by the consumer.

***Disclaimer: This is a summary, not a line by line depiction of S.B. 1766***
LABELING REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL HONEY PRODUCTION OPERATION

Must be labeled in accordance with Subchapter E Chapter 131 Ag Code
Labeling must include:

- Net weight in both avoirdupois (ounces/pounds) and metric
- Beekeepers name and address
- The statement “Bottled or packaged in a facility not inspected by the Texas Department of State Health Services”
- Optional statement: “Do not feed honey to infants under 1 year of age”
Donald Cole
304 Back Forty Loop
Williamsburg, VA 23188
(757) 745-9081
backfortybees@gmail.com

Back Forty Bees

Honey

All Natural Local Raw Honey
Unfiltered

NET WT. 22oz (624g)

Processed and Prepared Without State Inspection.

WARNING: Do Not Feed Honey to Infants Under One Year Old.
Desert Creek Honey is family owned and operated. We believe in doing all our own beekeeping and providing you with the many benefits found in raw honey. We produce and bottle all our honey in Texas. We are located east of McKinney and employ 144 million bees (that’s 1,800 beehives!) to bring you our all-natural, delicious Texas honey.

Visit our Facebook page to see our beekeeping operation in action! www.desertcreekhoney.com

214-886-6899
Product of the USA
575 CB 5019
Blue Ridge, Texas
**Important**

REGULATION OF SMALL HONEY PRODUCTION OPERATION PROHIBITED.

A local government authority, including a local health department, may not regulate the production of honey or honeycomb at a small honey production operation.
What does this mean to you?

Beekeepers are not required to obtain a Food Manufacturers License

Not required to have a Health Department approved honey house

No inspection of bottling facility
BEE CLEAN!

ALWAYS MAINTAIN
A SANITARY ENVIROMENT
FOR BOTTLING YOUR HONEY!
Marketing your Honey

➢ ADVERTISE!

➢ This does not have to cost an arm and a leg...

➢ Word of mouth is the best advertising so, give some away to your family, neighbors and friends, ask them to spread the word.

➢ Put up a sign in your yard, at your local feed store and convenience store

➢ Post a FREE Ad on Craigslist or other local sources/message boards

➢ Place an Ad on the Radio 99.9 KSHN (Liberty)

➢ Use Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, etc.)
Marketing (Cont.)

➢ Create a website – FOR ADVERTISING ONLY**
➢ Get some cards made...Vistaprint has great prices & you design it yourself!
➢ Leave your contact information at your local health food store, coffee shop, nail salon, anywhere you do business.
➢ Call your local newspaper
➢ Reach out to Boy & Girl Scout troops
Selling your Honey

➢ PRICING:
  ➢ Don’t sell yourself short!
  ➢ Don’t undercut the competition...it is bad for all beekeepers
  ➢ A good rule of thumb is $1 per ounce, offer discounts for larger quantities

➢ WHERE to sell:
  ➢ Texas laws limit where you can sell, per the Senate Bill 1766
    ➢ Must be sold directly to the consumer
  ➢ Attend a Farmer’s Market, Church Bazarr or Holiday Fair
  ➢ Set up an Honor System Honey Stand
Extras!

- Make Meade from excess Honey
- Use/sell other products of the hive
  - Beeswax
    - Candles
    - Soap
    - Lip Balm
    - Skin salves
  - Propolis – natural antibacterial
  - Bee Pollen
  - Bee Larva
  - Dead Adult Bees....yes...you can sell dead bees!