

Extract from the Bio Suisse Standards

Beekeeping and Honey Processing

Based on Part V, Chap. 4.4.3 and Part III Chap. 12

1 Beekeeping

Certification according to the Bio Suisse Standards for individual honey producers/producer groups may be obtained directly on the basis of EU Organic certification and confirmation by the inspection body that the following conditions have been met:

- No synthetically produced essential oils (e.g. synthetic thymol) are used to combat Varroa mites.
- Confirmation has been furnished that no high conservation value areas have been cleared according to the standards Clearing and destroying forests and high conservation value areas Part V, Chap. 3.5, Page 283, if the beekeeper also runs a farming operation.
- There are no GMO plots within a radius of 10 km.
- If a beekeeper is also the operations manager of a farming operation, the operation must be fully certified in accordance with the EU organic regulation or equivalent. This does not apply to self-sufficiency crops as per the definition in Simplified certification of smallholder groups Part V, Art. 3.1.5.3, Page 278. If this is not the case, then the beekeeper may not be approved as a honey producer for Bio Suisse certification (including as a member of a producer group).

2 Honey extraction and processing

- Equipment and containers used for processing honey must be made of food-grade materials. Stainless steel/chrome steel is recommended for centrifuges and spinners.
- Filtration: The honey may be filtered through a sieve to remove wax particles, but the mesh width should not be smaller than 0.2 mm (also applies in the case of multiple filtering steps).

Liquidisation of crystallised honey:

- For the purpose of bottling: this processing step should be gentle, i.e. as short as possible and at a low temperature: Melitherm heating, water bath (40°C, maximum of 72 hours) or heating room at 48°C, maximum of 72 hours.
- In large containers for further processing (semi-finished product): liquidised in a heating room at 48°C for a maximum of 120 hours
- Deep-freezing to delay crystallisation: maximum of 12 months.
- The deep-freezing of honey must be declared (e.g. "Deep-frozen temporarily to delay crystallisation").
- The maximum permissible HMF content (determined by the Winkler method) is 15 mg/kg. The invertase level should be at least 10 units; in the case of acacia and phacelia yields, it should be at least 7 units. Joint testing of the HMF content and invertase level is only necessary in case of doubt. Honey that does not meet these requirements may only be marketed as honey for further processing and must be declared accordingly.

3 Packaging

- The following packaging materials are prescribed for the purposes of trade or storage: chrome steel, tinfoil (without rust spots) and food-grade plastics. Packaging materials containing chlorine (e.g. PVC) are not permitted.
- Retail packaging overseas may only be done with the consent of Bio Suisse.