

Texas Department of State Health Services

Consumer Protection Division- Manufactured Foods

Beekeeper Honey Production Frequently Asked Questions - July 15, 2020

1. Did anything change for beekeepers selling honey in Texas with the adoption of the updated 25 TAC 229.210-225 Subchapter N, Current GMP and GWP in Manufacturing, Packing or Holding Human Food that became effective August 2, 2017?

Yes, beekeepers that sell raw honey produced from their own bees/hives are “farms” and are exempt from licensing as food manufacturers when engaged in allowable farm activities. Examples of allowable farm activities include extracting and bottling raw honey whether for retail or wholesale. DSHS adopts the clarification provided by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in its [Questions and Answers Regarding Food Facility Registration \(Seventh Edition\): Guidance for Industry in Question B.1.19.](#)

2. Is pasteurization of raw honey an allowable farm activity?

No, pasteurizing raw honey is a manufacturing activity that requires a license as a food manufacturer. DSHS adopts the clarification provided by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in its [Questions and Answers Regarding Food Facility Registration \(Seventh Edition\): Guidance for Industry in Question C.4.3.](#)

3. Are there any laws that apply to beekeeper raw honey producers?

Yes, while beekeepers harvesting raw honey will not be required to license with DSHS as long as they are only engaged in allowable farm activities, harvesting operations that conduct filtering, packaging, and labeling of honey are still subject to the adulteration and misbranding provisions of [Texas Health and Safety Code 431. Texas Agriculture Code, Title 6, Chapter 131, Bees and Honey, Subchapter E, Labeling and Sale of Honey](#) gives DSHS regulatory authority over the labeling of honey. DSHS will investigate complaints of adulterated honey and mislabeled honey and take appropriate compliance action.

4. Can a beekeeper blend other raw honey into raw honey from their own bees/hives?

Yes, as long as some of the raw honey is from the beekeeper’s own bees/hives, a beekeeper can blend other raw honey with the beekeeper’s honey. If you blend honey no longer considered raw, like pasteurized honey, blending is no longer an exempt farm activity and a food manufacturer license is required.

5. Is allowing raw honey to dry so that it crystallizes an allowable farm activity for beekeepers?

| Yes, a beekeeper drying raw honey from their bees/hives is an allowable farm activity as long as there is no additional manufacturing/processing (other than packaging and labeling). Packaging and labeling raw agricultural commodities are allowable farm activities.

6. If a beekeeper whips air into their raw honey to sell as whipped honey, would this be considered manufacturing requiring the firm to license as a food manufacturer?

Yes, whipping air into raw honey is a manufacturing activity that requires a food manufacturer license.