

HONEY EXTRACTION

For honey extraction only sealed honey frames are removed. Do not extract uncapped honey since it is unripe and due to higher moisture contents, it is liable to ferment.



Time to remove supers

Early in the morning before bees start storing unripe honey in the combs. If combs are well sealed, these can be removed at any time of the day.

All the management practices of honey bee colonies are ultimately directed to get better quality hive products. It is, therefore, important that apiary honey is extracted properly so as to retain its quality. The process of extraction should be hygienic and prevent any extraneous material in honey.

Requirements:

- Smoker, bee veil, hive tool, bee brush, empty super bodies, uncapping knife, boiling water, drip trays, honey extractor, honey storage container, muslin cloth

Procedure of honey extraction:

- To remove sealed honey combs, give few puffs of smoke to the colony and brush off bees from the honey combs using soft bee brush or bunch of soft green grass
- Place the honey combs in bee tight hive bodies and shift to honey extraction room

- Never rob the colonies of their entire honey stores. Depending on strength, keep with each colony at least 5-10 kg of honey in case of *Apis mellifera* and 2-3kg with *A. cerana* for summer and monsoon dearth periods
- Honey extraction room should be bee tight. After bringing the honey frames for extraction, these can be uncapped either with a steam heated double walled uncapping knife or with ordinary uncapping knife by heating in boiling water
- Keep these uncapped frames in hive bodies with drip trays below, till extraction
- Put the uncapped frames in honey extractor and work at about 150 revolutions per minute for 1 to 2 minutes. Then reverse the sides of the frames and repeat the extraction process
- Stock the emptied frames in hive bodies and return these to the colonies for cleaning. Shorten the hive entrance to avoid robbing
- Since freshly extracted honey is warm and easy to strain, arrangements for straining using muslin cloth and packing should be promptly made so as to prevent subsequent heating
- Clean the appliances and the place where honey is extracted
- Beeswax collected during uncapping of honey frames should be allowed to drain off its honey. Then purify this beeswax by putting in a muslin bag and boiling in a water bath. On, cooling pure beeswax will float over the surface of water and all impurities will remain in the muslin bag.





Precautions during honey extraction

- Remove only completely sealed or two third sealed combs of honey for extraction.
- Never extract unripe honey
- Keep sufficient food stores with the colonies as per strength and prevailing dearth period.
- Do not rob the colonies of their whole stores.