

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
(Department of Agriculture and Co-operation)

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 24th December, 2008

G.S.R. 877(E)- Whereas the draft of Honey Grading and Marking Rules, 2008, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 (1 of 1937) was published vide notification Number-G.S.R.475(E) dated 20th June,2008, in the Gazette of India, Part II, Section 3, sub-section (i), inviting objections and suggestions from all persons likely to be affected thereby within forty five days from the date on which copies of the said notification published in the Gazette of India were made available to the public.

And whereas copies of the said notification were made available to the public on 30th June, 2008. And whereas the objections and suggestions received from the public in respect of the said draft rules have been duly considered.

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937, and in supersession of Honey Grading and Marking Rules,1970, the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:-

RULES

1. (1) These rules may be called the Honey Grading and Marking Rules, 2008.
(2) They shall apply to all type of honey.
(3) They shall come into force on the date of their final publication in the Official Gazette.
2. **Definitions.** - In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires.-
 - (a) "Agricultural Marketing Adviser" means the Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India;
 - (b) "authorized packer" means a person or a body of persons who has been granted certificate of authorization to grade and mark honey in accordance with the provisions of these rules;
 - (c) "certificate of authorization" means a certificate issued under the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988 made under section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 (1 of 1937);
 - (d) "honey" means the natural sweet substance produced by honey bees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of plants, which honey bees collect, transform and store in honey combs for ripening.
 - (e) "Schedule" means a schedule appended to these rules.
3. **Grade designation.**- For the purpose of these rules, the grade designations shall be the name of the grades which indicate the quality of honey as set out in Schedule II .
4. **Quality.** - For the purpose of these rules, the quality of honey shall be such as set out in Schedule II.
5. **Grade designation mark.**-The grade designation mark shall consist of "AGMARK INSIGNIA" consisting of a design incorporating the certificate of authorization number and the word "AGMARK", name of the commodity, grade designation resembling the one as set out in Schedule I.
6. **Method of packing.**- (1)The Honey shall be packed in new clean glass containers, china-ware lacquered cans, acid resistant lacquered tin container, cartons ,pet jars of food grade quality or any other containers or packing material of food grade quality as may be approved by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser from time to time.
 - (2) All packing material shall be securely closed and sealed in a manner approved by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser.
 - (3) Honey shall be packed in pack sizes as per instructions of the Agricultural Marketing Adviser issued from time to time.
 - (4) The containers shall not be composed wholly or partly of any poisonous or deleterious substances which renders the contents injurious to health.

(5) The containers shall also be free from insect infestation, fungus contamination or any obnoxious and undesirable smell. The screwed caps shall be of non-corrosive and non-reactive material to honey.

7. **Method of marking and labeling.**- (1) The grade designation mark shall be securely affixed to or clearly and indelibly printed on each package or container as per instructions of the Agricultural Marketing Adviser or an officer authorized by him in this behalf in accordance with rule 11 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988.

(2) In addition to the grade designation mark, the following particulars shall be clearly and indelibly marked on each package or container, namely.-

- (a) name and address of the packer;
- (b) address of the packing place;
- (c) date of packing ; *
- (d) BEST BEFORE..... MONTH..... YEAR from the date of packing;
- (e) lot/batch number;
- (f) net weight;
- (g) maximum retail price (inclusive of all taxes);
- (h) name of geographical region/area(optional);
- (i) nutritional information
- (j) any information required under provisions of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act or Rules or The Standards of Weight and Measures Act, 1976;
- (k) any other information required by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser.
- (l) storage condition ,if any.

*** The date of packing shall be the date of completion of the analysis of the sample.**

(3) An authorized packer may, after obtaining prior approval of the Agricultural Marketing Adviser, in accordance with the rule 11 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, affix his private trade mark or trade brand on the graded packages or container, provided that the private trade mark or trade brand does not indicate quality or grade of the produce other than indicated by the grade designation mark affixed to the graded package or container in accordance with these rules.

(4) Honey may be designated according to floral or plant source if it comes wholly or mainly from any particular source and has the organoleptic, physicochemical and microscopic properties corresponding with that origin.

8. **Special conditions for grant of certificate of authorization.**- In addition to the general conditions specified in sub-rule (8) of rule 3 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, the following shall be the special conditions for grant of certificate of authorization for honey, namely:-

- (i) the authorized packer shall have either a fully equipped laboratory with all necessary chemicals and apparatus or he should have an access to such a laboratory for testing the raw materials and for grading and marking of the produce;
- (ii) the authorized packer shall ensure the compliance of the following requirements of hygiene and sanitary conditions in grading and marking of the Honey, namely.-
 - (a) the premises for processing and packing shall be clean, adequately lighted ,well ventilated and fly proof;

- (b) the surrounding area or environment shall be free from objectionable odour, smoke, dust or air borne pathological contaminations;
- (c) the building shall be of a permanent structure with wall cemented or tiled walls and easily washable floors with proper drainage system;
- (d) all equipments and utensils shall be made of stainless steel or corrosive resistant material suitable for food contact applications.
- (e) the premises and the equipments should be often disinfected so as to maintain high order of hygienic and sanitary conditions;
- (f) no toxic or objectionable material other than the permissible shall be stored in the authorized grading premises;
- (g) in the case of resined utensils, recoating will be done after every three years and the packer shall have to furnish a certificate to this effect;
- (h) the personnel engaged in processing and packing of the product should be got medically checked periodically by the authorized Medical Officer and a certificate to the effect shall have to be produced on demand;
- (i) the authorized packer and approved chemist shall maintain proper record of raw materials and finished material used in processing the product and their analysis.

SCHEDULE-I
(see rule 5)

(DESIGN OF AGMARK INSIGNIA)



NAME OF COMMODITY_____

GRADE_____

Schedule II
Grade designation and quality of Honey
(see rules 3 and 4)

- (1) "Honey" shall be obtained from the natural sweet substance produced by honey bees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of plants, which honey bees collect, transform and store in honey combs for ripening.
- (2) **Minimum requirements:**
 - (i) Honey shall be,-
 - (a) well ripened, natural product produced by honey bees;
 - (b) of sweet flavour, pleasant odour and taste and characteristic aroma;
 - (c) of uniform colour through out and may vary from light to dark brown;
 - (d) free from visible mould, inorganic or organic matters such as insects, insect debris, brood or grains of sand dirt, pieces of beeswax, the fragments of bees and other insects and free from any other extraneous matter;
 - (e) free of any added food additives such as colour, vitamins, minerals and saccharin;
 - (f) free of toxic substances arising from the micro organisms or plants which may constitute a hazard to health;
 - (g) free of any objectionable flavour, aroma or taint absorbed from foreign matter during its processing and storage;
 - (h) be free from suspended particles.
 - (ii) Honey shall not have begun to ferment or effervesce. Filtration is permitted to remove objectionable matter provided sufficient pollen grains which characterized the honey are retained.
 - (iii) Honey shall not be heated to such an extent that its essential composition and quality are impaired.
 - (iv) Honey shall have been strained clear through a double thickness of cheese cloth (150 microns) at a temperature below 65 degrees centigrade.
 - (v) Honey shall comply with restrictions in regards to Metallic Contaminants (rule 57), Crop Contaminants (rule 57 A), Naturally occurring toxic substances (rule 57 B), insecticides and pesticides residue (rule 65) and other food safety requirements as laid down under Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955 as amended from time to time for domestic purposes.
 - (vi) Honey shall comply restrictions in regards to heavy metals, pesticides and other food safety requirements as specified in Codex Alimentarius Commission or as per buyer's requirements for export purposes.
 - (vii) The pH of honey shall be between 3.2 to 4.5.

(3) Criteria for grade designation:

	Parameters	Grade designation		
		Special	Grade-A	Standard
1	Specific gravity at 27 Degree Centigrade, (Minimum)	1.40	1.37	1.35
2	Moisture, percentage by mass, (Maximum)	20	22	25
3	Total reducing sugars, percentage by mass, (Minimum)	70	65	65
	Carvia- callosa and Honeydew honey, percentage by mass, (Minimum)	60	60	60
4	Sucrose, percentage by mass, (Maximum)	5	5	5
	Carvia-callosa & Honeydew honey, (Maximum)	10	10	10
5	Fructose and Glucose ratio (F/G Ratio) (Minimum)	1.00	0.95	0.95
6	Ash, percentage by mass, for honey (Maximum)	0.50	0.50	0.50
	Ash, percentage by mass for Honey dew honey or a mixture of honey dew honey and blossom honey, (Maximum)	0.50	0.50	0.50
7	Acidity expressed as formic acid percentage(by mass), (Maximum), or Free Acidity Milli equivalents acid/1000g, (Maximum)	0.20	0.20	0.20
		40	40	40
8	Fiehe's Test \$	Negative		
9	Aniline chloride test	Negative		
10	Total count of pollen and plant elements/g (i). APIARY HONEY (Maximum) (EXTRACTED HONEY)	50,000	50,000	50,000
	(ii). SQUEEZED HONEY (Minimum)	50,000	50,000	50,000
11	Hydroxy Methyl Furfural (H.M.F.) mg/kg. (Maximum)	80	80	80
12	Optical Density at 660 nm. percentage (Maximum)	0.3	0.3	0.3
13	Diastase activity. in schade units, (Minimum)	3	3	3
14	Water insoluble matters percentage (Maximum), For Pressed honey	0.50	0.50	0.50
	Other than Pressed honey	0.10	0.10	0.10

Note: If the pollen count is higher than 50000/gm. Then honey may be categorized as squeezed Honey.

§ If Fiehe's test is positive, but Hydroxy Methyl Furfural (H.M.F.) content is below 80 p.p.m then honey may be accepted.

(4) Other requirements:

- (i) Honey shall be homogeneous. It may be warmed before use, if granulated.
- (ii) Honey shall be designated according to floral or plant source, if it comes wholly or mainly from any particular source and has the organoleptic, physicochemical and microscopic properties corresponding with that origin.
 - (a) In the case of "UNIFLORAL HONEY", the minimum pollen content of the plant species concerned shall not be less than 45 percent of total pollen content and
 - (b) In the case of "MULTI FLORAL HONEY", the pollen content of any of the plant species shall not exceed 45 percent of the total pollen content.
- (iii) Honey shall be stored in cool and dry place maintained in hygienic condition.

Explanations:

- (1) "Apiary honey" is the honey produced from domesticated beehives.
- (2) "Blossom honey" or Nectar honey is the honey which comes from nectar of flowers.
- (3) "Carvia collosa" is the honey derived from carvia collosa plant's flower which is described as thixotropic and is gel like extremely viscous when standing still and turned into liquid when agitated or stirred.
- (4) "Extracted honey" is honey obtained by centrifuging decapped broodless combs; or without the application of moderate heat.
- (5) "Honeydew honey" is the honey which comes mainly from excretions of plant sucking insects (*Hemiptera*) on the living parts of plants or secretions of living parts of plants.
- (6) "Squeezed honey" is honey obtained by pressing or squeezing of broodless combs.

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