

Dominica National **STANDARD**

Specification for Honey

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DOMINICA BUREAU OF STANDARDS

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Draft No. 1

ISSUED FOR COMMENT ONLY

DRAFT
DOMINICA NATIONAL STANDARD
SPECIFICATION FOR HONEY

This is a draft and should not be regarded or used
as a Dominica National Standard

Last date for comments

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GENERAL STATEMENT

The Dominica Bureau of Standards was established under the Standards Act (#4) of 1999 and started operations in April 2000. A broad-based 15-member Standards Council governs the affairs of the Bureau.

The Standards Act gives the Bureau the responsibility to facilitate the development and promotion of Standards and Codes of Practice for products and services for the protection of the health and safety of consumers and the environment as well as for industrial development in order to promote the enhancement of the economy of Dominica.

The Bureau develops Standards through consultations with relevant interest groups. In accordance with the provisions of the Standards Act, public comment is invited on all draft Standards before they are declared as Dominica National Standards (DNS).

The Bureau is a correspondent member body of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), an affiliate member of the International Electro-technical Commission (IEC), and a member of the Caribbean Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ). The Bureau is the local agent for foreign Standard Body, the American Standards for Testing and Measurement (ASTM). The Bureau also serves as the enquiry point for the World Trade Organization (WTO) on matters pertaining to the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement and is the Contact Point for Codex Alimentarius.

In accordance with good practice for the adoption and application of Standards, Dominica National Standards are subject to periodic review every five years.

Amendments

Amendment No.	Date of Issue	Text (s) Affected

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**DOMINICA NATIONAL STANDARD
SPECIFICATION FOR HONEY**

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0.1. NATIONAL FOREWORD

- 0.1.1. This Dominica National Standard was adopted by the Bureau of Standards (the Bureau) of the Commonwealth of Dominica on _____ after the draft was finalized by National Food and Agriculture Technical Committee (NFA) and has been approved by the Minister responsible for the Bureau.
- 0.1.2. This Standard became effective as a Compulsory Standard on the date notified by the Minister with responsibility for the Bureau of Standards in a Notice published in the Commonwealth of Dominica Official Gazette on _____.
- 0.1.3. This standard is a modified adoption of CRS 18: 2011 – Specification for Honey.
- 0.1.4. Acknowledgement is given to the *CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standardisation and Quality (CROSQ)* for providing permission to adopt CRS 18: 2011.
- 0.1.5. Although the editorial style and layout of the CRS 18: 2011 are not in conformity with that of Dominica's Standards, the modified adoption has been approved as suitable for publication as a Dominica National Standard.

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0.2. NATIONAL DEVIATIONS

0.2.1. 3.4 Inserted definition for the term "Clump" - a localized patch of cyrstallized honey.

0.2.2. 5.4.1 updated to read

All containers in which honey is packaged shall be clean, dry, sanitized, disinfected and of food grade quality.

0.2.3. 5.4.6 updated to read

All packages shall be tamper-proof or have safety seals.

0.2.4. 5.5 h) The Note below was added to the sub-clause

NOTE Information on crystallization of honey and nutritional facts is optional.

0.2.5. 5.5 i) Sub-clause below included

For Honey declared as 'Product of Dominica', it shall be produced solely from hives kept in Dominica.

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Foreword

For several years, traders and consumers have raised concerns about the quality of honey on the market. More recently they have been joined by commercial bee farmers and manufacturers who use the commodity. There is also a growing international demand for standards, especially to satisfy increasingly stringent requirements for export. This regional standard was developed in an effort to:

- a) specify and harmonize quality requirements for honey;
- b) ensure adequate and hygienic production; and
- c) ensure acceptable product quality and safety for human consumption.

It was approved by the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on 3-4 May 2011.

In the development of this standard, assistance was derived from the following:

- a) CODEX STAN 12-1981, Rev. 1 (1987) Codex Standard for Honey;
- b) BNS 35: 1978 Barbados National Standard for honey;
- c) European Union Council Directive 2001/110/EC, of 20 December, 2001, relating to honey;
- d) European Union Commission Decision, of 12 August 2002, implementing Council Directive 96/23/EC concerning the performance of analytical methods and implementing the results;
- e) Draft Jamaican Standard Specification for Honey.

Acknowledgement

In developing this standard, four consultation meetings were held in Jamaica – in Kingston, Mandeville, Montego Bay and Portland. The committee acknowledges the contributions of the many beekeepers and other persons who participated in these consultations. The final document was greatly informed by the proceedings of these meetings.

1 Scope

This standard prescribes the requirements for honey produced by the honeybees *Apis mellifera* and *Meliponini sp.* It specifies three grades of honey with requirements for production, handling, packaging, labelling, analytic sampling and testing of honey that is intended or offered for sale in Dominica. This standard takes into account the management of equipment and storage conditions of honey, and requirements for hygienic production that assures the safety of food for human consumption.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

CODEX STAN 12, Codex Standard for Honey

Dominica National Standard, DNS 2: Part 3, Specification for Labelling of pre-packaged foods

Dominica National Code of Practice, DNCP 1: Part 1, Code of Practice for General Principles of Food Hygiene - Part 1: Food Production and Processing

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

blending

mixing of two or more honeys from different floral sources or geographical areas in order to obtain a desired quality such as colour, flavour, and or viscosity

3.2

brood

egg, larva and pupa stages in the life of bees

3.3

chunk honey

liquid honey in which one or more pieces of honey combs, with mostly sealed cells, has been substantially submerged

3.4

clump

a localized patch of crystallized honey

3.5

comb honey

honey that is stored by bees in the cells of freshly built broodless combs

NOTE Comb honey is sold in sealed whole combs or sections of such combs.

3.6

creamed honey

homogenised granulated honey

NOTE Creamed honey is sold in sealed whole combs or sections of such combs

3.7

crystallisation

naturally occurring process in which a portion of the sugars in honey settle out of the solution, into a hard or semi-solid mass

3.8

crystallised honey

honey that has undergone crystallisation

NOTE Also known as granulated honey

3.9

drained honey

honey that is obtained by draining decapped broodless combs

3.10

draining

separation of honey by gravity, through a strainer, from combs that have been crushed or broken up

3.11

extracted honey

honey that is obtained by centrifuging decapped broodless combs

3.12

extracting

removal of honey from whole combs by centrifuging in a honey extractor

3.13

filtered honey

honey processed by filtration to remove extraneous solids and pollen grains

3.14

filtering

removal of undesirable particles from honey, by any means, that could also result in significant removal of pollen

3.15

honey

natural sweet substance produced by certain species of honey bees, including *Apis mellifera*, and stingless bees from the nectar of plants, other secretions of living parts of plants or the excretions of plant-sucking insects, which bees collect, transform by combining with specific substances of their own, deposit, dehydrate, store and leave in the honey comb to ripen and mature

3.16

honeydew honey

honey that is produced when bees collect the sweet, sticky excretions of aphids and other plant sucking insects

NOTE Honeydew honey may also be produced from the exudates of plants.

3.17

hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF)

aldehyde that is produced as a result of the breakdown of fructose in the presence of an acid in honey

NOTE HMF is triggered by the dehydration and or heating of honey.

3.18

liquid honey

honey in the fluid state after it has been removed from the comb

3.19

monofloral honey

honey that is made predominantly from the nectar of flowers of a single species of plant

3.20

multifloral honey

honey that is made from the nectar of flowers of more than one species of plant

NOTE Also known as polyfloral honey.

3.21

organic honey

honey produced, processed and packaged under conditions that effectively eliminate synthetic chemicals and substances that do not occur naturally

3.22

pfund colour grader

device used to measure the colour of honey

3.23

pressed honey

honey that is obtained by pressing or squeezing broodless combs

3.24

primary production method

method used to remove liquid honey from the combs including extracting, draining, straining and pressing

3.25

secondary production method

method applied after the honey has been removed from the combs including blending, filtering, and heating

3.26

seeding

addition of a small amount of crystallized honey larger volume of honey in order to speed up or otherwise control the crystallization or granulation process

3.27

stingless bee honey

honey that is produced entirely by the indigenous 'stingless bee' of the *Melipona sp.* and *Trigona sp*

3.28

strained honey

honey that has been passed through a mesh to remove undesirable particles without significant removal of pollen, minerals or valuable enzymes

NOTE Undesirable particles include pieces of beeswax and bits of propolis.

3.29

sugarcane honey

honey that is produced when bees collect the sap from cut sugarcane stumps

4 Description

4.1 Honey is a pure natural product to which no other substance has been added. It is generally yellowish to light tan in colour but may be pale to colourless dark amber or even greenish. Honey always darkens as it ages.

4.2 The plant source(s) of the nectar from which it is made is the major factor that influences the characteristics of honey. Hence, like colour, there are considerable differences in viscosity, aroma and secondary flavours such as bitterness or tartness.

4.3 In its natural state, honey is a sweet, sticky and highly variable liquid. However, if kept long enough, it will eventually granulate and often gets quite hard. This is a natural process that is accelerated when honey is stored under cool conditions. The rate at which crystallisation occurs depends on the ratio of the sugars in the honey and that too is related to the source of the nectar from which the honey is made.

5 General requirements

5.1 Production and hygiene requirements

5.1.1 Honey shall be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of Dominica National Code of Practice, CRCP 1: Part 1 *Code of Practice for General Principles of Food Hygiene - Part 1: Food Production and Processing*.

5.1.2 The owners and managers of bee hives shall use pesticides in hives and apiaries in accordance with the recommendations of the competent national authority.

5.1.3 Processing and packaging of honey shall be done in vermin-free and sanitary facilities.

5.1.4 Handlers of honey shall maintain appropriate food-handling practices.

5.1.5 Honey shall not be exposed to high temperatures which destroys the naturally occurring enzymes. Honey shall not be heated to a temperature greater than 60 °C

5.2 Storage

5.2.1 Honey shall be adequately stored at ambient temperature. If kept outdoors, it shall be kept in a shaded area, away from exposure to direct sunlight.

5.2.2 Honey shall be stored in food-grade containers which are not likely to impair its taste, chemical characteristics or render it harmful to health.

5.2.3 Storage containers shall be air-tight to prevent the honey from losing flavour, absorbing moisture and or to reduce the risk of fermentation.

5.3 Forms of honey

5.3.1 General

Honey shall be presented for sale to the general public in any of the following forms:

- a) liquid honey;
- b) comb honey;
- c) chunk honey; or
- d) crystallised honey.

5.3.2 Liquid honey

Liquid honey offered for sale and intended for human consumption shall satisfy the following conditions:

- a) it shall be free of any objectionable flavour or taint absorbed from foreign matter during the production, processing and storage of the product;
- b) on visual inspection, it shall be free from air bubbles (which cause a cloudy appearance) and foreign material, including mould, dirt, scum, insect, insect parts and other extraneous matter;
- c) it shall not contain pieces of beeswax, fragments of bees, clumps of pollen grains or hive debris; unless this condition is required by a particular market;
- d) the colour of the product shall be uniform throughout when packaged for the retail trade; and
- e) depending on its moisture content and the ambient temperature, its consistency shall vary from very fluid to highly viscous.

NOTE Requirements for Industrial honey are specified in 6.4.

5.3.3 Comb honey

5.3.3.1 Honeycomb that is sold as comb honey shall either:

- a) be entirely built by honeybees;
- b) constructed by honeybees on comb foundation that is made solely of beeswax; or
- c) built by the honeybees, in honeycomb "sections" that are made for that purpose.

5.3.3.2 Comb honey shall have at least 95% of sealed cells of honey and shall either be:

- a) a whole comb as it is taken from the hive; or
- b) a single piece cut from a whole comb or a honeycomb "section".

5.3.4 Chunk honey

Chunk honey shall comply with the following requirements:

- a) it shall be sold in a jar, tub or other wide-mouth container made of material that allows the consumer to clearly see its contents; and
- b) the honeycomb shall occupy at least a third of the volume of the container.

5.3.5 Crystallised honey

If crystallised honey was produced by any unnatural process, including seeding this shall be clearly indicated.

5.4 Packaging requirements

- 5.4.1 All containers in which honey is packaged shall be clean, dry, sanitized, disinfected and of food grade quality.
- 5.4.2 The containers shall be filled under sanitary conditions.
- 5.4.3 Equipment used to fill containers and package honey shall be maintained and operated under hygienic and sanitary conditions.
- 5.4.4 Packaging procedures shall minimize moisture absorption and prevent leakage.
- 5.4.5 Packaging materials which do not alter the taste or chemical characteristics of honey or make it harmful to health shall be used.
- 5.4.6 All packages shall be tamper-proof or have safety seals.
- 5.4.7 The container in which honey is offered for sale to the general public shall not have any other product label.

5.5 Labelling and traceability requirements

In addition to the requirements outlined in Dominica National Standard DNS 2: Part 3 - Specification for Labelling of pre-packaged foods, the following specific provisions shall apply:

- a) the name of the product shall be 'Honey'. This word shall appear on the principal display panel;
- b) the form of the product, as outlined in 5.3.3 to 5.3.5, shall also be clearly indicated, on the principal display panel;
- c) the product shall be designated according to a particular floral or plant source, in accordance with the requirements of 6.2, only if the predominant part of the product originated from that source;
- d) the product shall be designated by the name of a particular place such as a district, a geographical region such as a parish, or an ecological zone such as a mountain or wetland area, only if it was produced at the place or wholly within the region or zone. Designation, if applicable, shall be in accordance with the requirements of 6;

NOTE For liquid honey, the label may indicate the predominant method(s) of production. See 3.23 and 3.24;

- e) if the honey was produced by the indigenous stingless bee (*Meliponini sp*), the words 'Stingless Bee Honey' shall be clearly displayed on the label;
- f) the net contents shall be clearly stated on the label, in metric weight (g or kg);

- g) a batch number or code number shall be indicated on the label or on the container; and
- h) the country of origin declared on the package shall be the country where the hives from which the honey originated is kept.

NOTE Information on crystallization of honey and nutritional facts is optional.

- i) For Honey declared as 'Product of Dominica', it shall be produced solely from hives kept in Dominica

6 Grades of (liquid) honey

6.1 General

One of the following grades shall be clearly indicated on the label of every container of liquid honey that is offered for sale:

- a) Grade A1 Honey;
- b) Grade A2 Honey;
- c) Honeydew Honey or Grade B1 Honey; or
- d) Industrial Honey or Grade B2 Honey.

6.2 Grade A1 honey

6.2.1 The designations 'Grade A1 honey' may include blended honeys.

6.2.2 Grade A1 honey shall comply with the analytical requirements outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 — Analytical requirements for Grade A1 and A2 honey

Characteristic	Requirements
Colour	Pale or colourless to dark amber
Sugar content	
(a) Fructose plus glucose	Not less than 60 %
(b) Sucrose (apparent)	Not more than 5 %
Water content	Not more than 20 %
Water-insoluble content	0.1 % - 0.3 %
Electrical conductivity	Not more than 0.8 mS/cm
Free acids	Not more than 50 milli-equivalents acid per 1000 grams
Diastase activity	Not be less than 8.0 Schade Units
HMF	Not more than 80 mg/kg

6.3 Grade A2 honey

6.3.1 General

The designations 'Grade A2 Honey' shall be strictly reserved for the following types of honey that comply with the analytical requirements in Table 1:

- a) honey from a named geographic source or ecological zone;
- b) monofloral honey;
- c) organic honey; or
- d) stingless bee honey.

6.3.2 Honey from a named geographical source or ecological zone

Honey shall only be named after a place or an area if the apiary or apiaries from which it is produced are located:

- a) within 1.0 km of the named place;
- b) entirely within the named and clearly delimited geographic area; or
- c) entirely within a defined ecological zone.

6.4 Honeydew honey or Grade B1 honey

Grade B1 honey shall comply with the analytical requirements outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 —Analytical requirements for Grade B1 honey

Characteristic	Requirements
Colour	Pale or colourless to dark amber
Sugar content	
(a) Fructose plus glucose	Not less than 45 %
(b) Sucrose (apparent)	Not more than 5 %
Water content	Not more than 20 %
Water-insoluble content	0.1 % - 0.3 %
Electrical conductivity	Not more than 0.8 mS/cm
Free acids	Not more than 50 milli-equivalents acid per 1000 grams
Diastase activity	Not be less than 8.0 Schade Units
HMF	Not more than 80 mg/kg

6.5 Grade B2 honey (industrial honey)

6.5.1 The designations 'Industrial Honey' or 'Grade B2 Honey' shall be assigned to honey that is fit for human consumption but deviates from the requirements for Grade A1, Grade A2 and Grade B1 honey. Such deviations shall not include the presence of chemical or biological contaminants. They shall only be the result of one or more properties, arising purely from the source of the honey, the manner in which it was handled or its age.

6.5.2 Whenever Industrial (Grade B2) honey is offered for sale on the retail market, the reason(s) for its designation as such, as well as any applicable warning or precautionary statement shall be prominently indicated on the label or elsewhere on the container.

EXAMPLE "The yeast content of this product is high, and it may foam when the container is opened"

7 Analytical requirements and testing of honey

7.1 All honey that is offered for sale in CARICOM shall satisfy the descriptive and analytical criteria that are established for at least one of the three grades, as outlined in 5.

7.2 Methods of test shall be carried out in accordance with CODEX Stan 12 Codex Standard for Honey.

7.3 Honey shall not contain chemical residues which exceed the tolerable limit that is set for any chemical or group of chemical substances. These chemicals and tolerances shall be determined by the responsible national government agency or regulatory body.

7.4 Packers or bottlers of liquid, chunk and creamed honey shall retain at least one sample of each batch, for testing by the relevant authorities.

7.5 For liquid honey, the minimum sample size shall be 30 g.

7.7 The sample(s) with the relevant batch number or code affixed shall not be disposed of before the best-before-date for the batch.

End of document



Dominica Bureau of Standards

Dominica Bureau of Standards is a statutory body established under the Standards Act No. 4 of 1999 to establish, promote and maintain Standards for:

- a. Improving goods and services produced or used in Dominica;
- b. Processes and practices for ensuring industrial efficiency and development;
- c. Public and industrial welfare, health and safety;
- d. Safeguarding the environment.

The National Standard Council

The National Standard Council (NSC), a fourteen (14) member Council representing various interest groups, is appointed by the Minister responsible for the Dominica Bureau of Standards yearly, to guide the policy decision matters of the Bureau and oversee its financial management. The Council is also responsible for the general administrative affairs of the Dominica Bureau of Standards.

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