

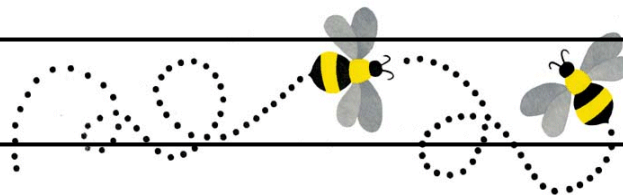
The Bee Line

Pineywoods Beekeepers Association

Next meeting TBA

<https://www.pineywoodsbeekeepers.org/>

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What's Buzzing

Honey ranks as America's #1 preferred sweetener for the first time. The National Honey Board Consumer Attitudes & Usage Study 2020 asked consumers to choose their favorite among common sweeteners. Honey rated above others in attributes such as natural, unprocessed, good for the environment, organic, good source of antioxidants, and flavorful.

<https://www.honey.com/newsroom/pressrelease/buzzworthy-news-honey-ranks-as-americans-1-preferred-sweetener>

First-ever insect vaccine

The Dalan Animal Health oral vaccine is the first-ever vaccine for honey bees and other pollinators. It fights severe microbial diseases. By adding the vaccine to the queen's food, she then conveys disease resistance to her progeny.

<https://www.helsinki.fi/en/news/sustainability-news/the-first-ever-insect-vaccine-helps-bees-stay-healthy>

Selling Honey (the following is an excerpt from *The Journal of the Texas Beekeepers Association*, Nov/Dec 2020)

The Department of State Health Services has adopted the latest FDA guidance (7th edition) published in August 2018 regarding Food Facility Registration with respect to raw honey.

The Guidance reads:

B.1.19 Am I required to register if I extract and bottle honey produced on my farm (i.e., remove the wax seal and spin the honey out of the honeycomb, then bottle the honey)? No. Many activities associated with beekeeping and honey production are within the "farm" definition and therefore do not require registration. In this case, extracting honey is considered harvesting and bottling honey is packaging a RAC (raw agricultural commodity), which is a type of manufacturing/processing included within the "farm" definition.

As a result of this decision, beekeepers selling raw honey in Texas will no longer be required to obtain a Food Manufacturer's license and comply with the related requirements (i.e. licensed honey house, etc.) Since there is no requirement to obtain a Food Manufacturer's license, the statute exempting small-scale beekeepers is moot, and limitations specific to that statute will no longer be in effect.

The FAQs below are copied from the DSHS Manufactured Foods website:
<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foods/faqs.aspx> (scroll to the bottom of the page)

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. (see above)

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 4 Nov / Dec 2020 THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION 37 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.

What does all this mean? (Editorial Comment)

Dodie Stillman, Texas Beekeeper Association Area 1 Director and a member of WCABA, forwarded this information to me that the TBA will be sharing in their next newsletter about selling honey laws. When ask her opinion she said, “this is not widely known at this point...there hasn’t been much publicity about it...mostly because TBA was waiting for the FAQ to be posted online.” When asked how this might affect her way of doing business (beekeeping) she added, “It’s not going to change my extracting or handling

process (because) I don't have enough hives to get 1,000 lbs, much less the old limit of 2,500." "But everyone that was thinking of building a honey house can rethink the expense now." She admitted that the downside is self-regulation; hoping that beekeepers will be vigilant to still use sterile/clean bottles and practice approved bottling methods (excellent point). Be mindful as you might relax when it comes to your honey processing that all of the above is directed toward raw honey and "farm activities" and any "processing" of the honey is still under rules and regs that remain in place. Make sure you know the difference. ...the Editor

At-Home Beekeeping Series

The series is free of charge. Time for Q&A included. Meetings are 6:30-7:30 pm CST.

Dec 29: Beekeeping boxing day sales, with vendors & Geoff Williams (Auburn) & Anne Marie Fauval (Bee Informed Partnership)

Watch via Zoom Webinar <http://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838>

or Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceCountyextension/>

Buy and Sell

Wanted: Trinity Smith has moved back to the area and is eager to return to beekeeping. He's interested in helping you in your bee yard in exchange for bees. tss.honeybees@gmail.com

Wanted: Jay Jelinek is looking for a 9-frame manual radial extractor on legs. jjelinek1020@gmail.com or 936-637-4963

For sale: Varroa-resistant bees – 5-frame nucs (established comb/feed/brood/proven new queen) in your box in Groveton, \$120. Call for availability and reserve. FLOYD BEES/Rodger Floyd - After dark 936-831-2818 floyd@consolidated.net

Beekeeping supplies are available at Atwoods in Nacogdoches, Lone Star Farm & Home Center in Nacogdoches and Corrigan, Lufkin Farm Supply & Nursery in Lufkin, Circle Three Feed in Jasper, Motts Hardware/TKC Knives in Spurger, Fairmount Lumber & Hardware in Hemphill, and Tractor Supply in Center, Hemphill, Lufkin, and Nacogdoches. Shipley's Donuts has buckets with tight-fitting lids for inside-hive pail feeding - just make the holes. \$1 for small, \$2 for larger size.

Seasonal Tips

Robert Jones

December, like November, should be a time of rest and relaxation because the time for the new bee season comes January 1st. Remember early in this month to make arrangements for queens and new colonies.

Look at your successes and failures for the past year. Work on repeating the things you were successful at and try to remember the lessons you were taught by the failures you had. You don't want to repeat those. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Comb-Grown Goodness

Grilled Marinated Venison Backstrap

<https://www.simplyscratch.com/2020/08/grilled-marinated-venison-backstrap.html>

4 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
4 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons mirin
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon sugar
4 cloves fresh garlic, minced
1 ¼ to 1 ½ pounds venison backstrap (or sub with beef ribeye)
toasted sesame seeds, for serving
sliced green onions, for serving



Cut the venison back strap into 1-inch pieces.

In a shallow dish, measure and add the soy sauce, water, mirin, honey, sugar and garlic.

Add the backstrap pieces and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerated for 24 hours, tossing once or twice during that time.

Lightly grease grill grates prior to preheating your grill to medium-high (450-500°). Thread the meat onto skewers (I double them up so they're easier to turn), leaving a little room between each piece.

Once the grill is hot, place them onto the grates and cook 3 to 4 minutes a side.

Remove and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and green onions.

Make this a whole meal by serving with jasmine rice, a little teriyaki sauce, and Asian slaw.

Editor's note: I don't know about you, but I don't have mirin. I don't even know what it is! According to Bon Appetit, if you don't have mirin, you can sub in a dry sherry or a sweet marsala wine. Dry white wine or rice vinegar will also do, though you'll need to counteract the sourness with about a ½ teaspoon of sugar for every tablespoon you use.

Salted Honey Pie

<https://www.davidlebovitz.com/salted-honey-pie-recipe-four-and-twenty-blackbirds/>

For the crust

1 ¼ cups flour
2 teaspoons sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
3-4 tablespoons ice water

For the filling

8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1/3 cup sugar
1 tablespoon flour, or 2 teaspoons cornstarch
¾ teaspoon kosher or sea salt



1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¾ cup honey
3 large eggs, at room temperature
½ cup sour cream, heavy cream, or crème fraîche
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
flaky sea salt, to finish the pie

To make the pie crust

1. Assemble the pie crust by mixing the flour, sugar, and salt together in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. (It can also be made in a bowl with a pastry blender or in a food processor.)
2. Add the cubed butter and mix on medium speed until the butter is broken up into little pieces roughly the size of corn kernels. Add 3 tablespoons of ice water and mix on low speed until the dough begins to come together. If it appears dry, add the final tablespoon of ice water.
3. Stop the mixer and use your hands to gather the dough, and shape it into a disk. Wrap the dough in plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a 14-inch round. Transfer the dough to a 9-inch pie plate or pan. Ease the dough into the dish and trim the dough hanging over the edge, leaving about an inch of dough hanging over. Fold the overhanging dough under the rim of the pie. Crimp the rim of crust and return the pie dough to the refrigerator for 30 minutes to 1 hour, until firm.

To make the filling

5. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line the pie shell with foil and fill with pie weights. Bake the dough until it starts to set around the edges and turns a light golden brown. Remove the foil and weights, and continue to bake until the crust is *very light* golden brown. If it puffs up during baking at this point, gently press it down by poking it with a fork a few times and using a spatula to tap it down. Do not bake the pie shell until dark brown. Remove the pie shell from the oven to a wire rack. Reduce the heat of the oven to 350°F.
6. In a medium bowl, whisk together the melted butter, sugar, flour, salt, vanilla, and honey. Whisk in the eggs one at a time, then mix in the sour cream and vinegar. Scrape the filling into the baked pie shell. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes until the edges are golden brown and the center is almost set. It should still jiggle, but not be watery. (If the edges of the crust get too dark during baking, use one of the techniques listed in the headnote to mitigate that.)
7. Let the pie cool on a wire rack. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt before serving.

Variation: Replace 3 tablespoons of the sour cream (or heavy cream) with bourbon or dark rum.

Editor's note: If you want/need to make this gluten-free, the author notes that you can use the Pretzel Pie Crust (using gluten-free pretzels) and cornstarch in place of the flour in the filling. There's a link to the Pretzel Pie Crust on the recipe page.