

GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL STANDARDISATION ORGANISATION

(GSO)

FINAL DRAFT

HONEY

Compiled by

The Gulf Technical Committee for the Foodstuffs and Agricultural Products Sector

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HONEY

1. The area and scope of application

- 1.1 This standard specification is concerned with all honey produced by honey-bees and covers all styles of honey presentations which are intended for human consumption.
- 1.2 This specification also includes honey which is packed in bulk containers and which may be repacked into retail packs.

2. The supplementary reference sources

- 2.1 GSS 9/1995 "Labels for packed foodstuffs".
- 2.2 GSS 21/1984 "Health conditions in foodstuffs factories and those working in them".
- 2.3 GSS 122/1990 "Methods of testing honey".
- 2.4 GSS 382/1994 "The maximum permitted limits for insecticide residues in agricultural and foodstuffs products - Part One".
- 2.5 GSS 383/1994 "The maximum permitted limits for insecticide residues in agricultural and foodstuffs products - Part Two".
- 2.6 GSS 1016/1999 "The microbiological limits for commodities and foodstuffs".
- 2.7 GSS 1016/1999 "The maximum permitted limits for heavy metal elements".
- 2.8 GSS 1016/1999 "The maximum permitted limits for veterinary drugs residues".
- 2.9 GSS 1016/1999 "Labelling of unpacked foodstuffs".

3. Definitions

Honey is a naturally sweet substance which is produced by worker honey-bees from blossom nectar or from secretions from living plant parts or from the excretions of insects feeding on living plant sap, after it has been collected, prepared and mixed with particular substances and stored in waxen combs to mature.

- 3.1 Blossom or nectar honey: honey which is produced from the blossom nectar of plants.

- 3.2 Honeydew honey: This is honey which is produced from the secretions of insects feeding on living sap (hymenoptera) or feeding on the secretions of the living parts of plants.
- 3.3 Extracted honey: This is obtained by centrifugal force from honey-comb which is open and free from any of the insect growth phases.
- 3.4 Pressed honey: This is obtained by pressing honey-comb which is free from any of the insect growth phases.
- 3.5 Dried honey: This is obtained by drying honey-comb which is free from any of the insect growth phases.
- 3.6 Comb honey is honey which has been stored by worker honey-bees in newly-formed waxen honey-comb cells which are free from any of the insect growth phases, and is sold inside the closed honey-comb in the form of a complete comb or as parts of it.
- 3.7 Honey-comb sections or blocks of it in liquid honey is honey which contains honey on one or more combs.
- 3.8 Filtered honey is honey which has been obtained by filtering honey to clear it of grains of pollen.

4. Description

Honey has as its base various first-class fructose and glucose sugars in addition to other substances such as organic acids and enzymes and solid particles arising from the honey. The colour of the honey varies from being practically colourless to dark brown. As far as its viscosity is concerned, it may be in the form of a viscous liquid and may be partially or totally granulated, and the flavour and the smell vary depending on the original plants the honey was made from.

5. Requirements

- 5.1 No foodstuff ingredient must be added to the honey, such as foodstuff additives or other artificial additives other than honey. Similarly, it must be free from any strange substance, flavour or smell or any contaminant absorbed from outside during treatment or storage.

The honey must be free of incipient signs of fermentation and effervescence, and grains of nectar and any other element except what is unavoidable, whether it be organic or inorganic.

- 5.2 The honey must not be heated or treated to an extent where its composition is altered and/or its quality is impaired.

5.3 No chemical or biochemical treatment must be used to affect the granulation of the honey.

5.4 Moisture content

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|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Unclassified honey | Not in excess of 20% |
| Heather honey (Calluna) | Not in excess of 23% |

5.5 Sugars content

5.5.1 Fructose and glucose content (total)

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|---|---------------------------|
| Unclassified honey | Not less than 60g / 100 g |
| Honeydew honey and a blend of honeydew honey with blossom honey | Not less than 45g / 100 g |

5.5.2 Sucrose content

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Unclassified honey | Not in excess of 5g / 100g |
| Clover honey (medicago sativa), citrus fruits, false acacia (robinia pseudoacacia, French honeysuckle (hedysarom), Banksia (Banksia Menzies), eucalyptus "Alkina" (eucalyptus camaldulensis), lithrood (yakrivia lusda), yakrivia Milligani. | Not in excess of 10g / 100g |
| Lavender honey (lavandula), borage honey (borago officinalis) | Not in excess of 15g / 100g |

5.6 Contents of solids not soluble in water

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Non-pressed honey | Not in excess of 0.1g / 100g |
| Pressed honey | Not in excess of 0.5g / 100g |

5.7 Free acidity

Must not exceed 50 ml per 1,000 g.

5.8 Diastase activity

Diastase activity in honey estimated after preparation and/or blending, in general terms, must not be less than 8 Schade units. In the case of honey with a low natural enzyme content it should not be less than 3 Schade units.

5.9 Hydroxymethylfurfural content

The hydroxymethylfurfural content after preparation and/or blending must not exceed 80 mg / kg.

5.10 Electrical conductivity

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| Honey not classified below or a blend of them | Must not exceed 0.8 milli-siemens / centimetre |
| Honeydew honey, chestnut honey and a blend of the two of them, with the exception of the following: cane apple honey (arbutus anido), sand heather (erica), eucalyptus "Alkina", linden (types of tilia genus). ling heather (calluna vulgaris), manuka or jelly bush (leptospermum), tea tree (types of melaleuca genus). | Must not be less than 0.8 milli-siemens / centimetre |

5.11 Heavy metals

The honey must be free of heavy elements in quantities which would constitute a risk to human health. Similarly, the contents of the Gulf Specification referred to in Clause 2.7 are applicable to the product.

5.12 Residues of insecticides and veterinary drugs

There must be no exceeding of the maximum limits for residues of insecticides and veterinary drugs which are covered by this Specification over what is specified in the Gulf Standard Specifications referred to in clauses 2.4, 2.5 and 2.8.

5.13 In the preparation and handling of the product, the conditions stipulated for in the Standard Specification referred to in Clause 2.2 must be applied, together with those of all the specifications relating to foodstuff safety.

5.14 There must be no exceeding of the microbiological limits stipulated for in the Standard Specification referred to in clause 2.6.

6. Methods of taking samples and testing

The samples and inspection and testing of the representative samples shall be carried out in accordance with clause 2.3.

7. Clarificatory information

Without prejudice to what is contained in the Standard Specification referred to in clause 2.1, the following is also applicable:

7.1 The name of the foodstuff product.

7.1.1 It is not permitted to call any product "honey" if the provisions of this Specification have not been applied to it.

- 7.1.2 It is permitted to call a product "blossom honey" or "nectar honey" if it complies with what is stated in clause 3.1.
- 7.1.3 It is permitted to call a product "honeydew honey" if it complies with what is stated in clause 3.2. although that name must be close to the name of the product.
- 7.1.4 If the honeys stipulated for in clause 3.1 and clause 3.2 are mixed, the phrase "a blend of honeydew honey and nectar honey" must be included.
- 7.1.5 It is permitted for honey to be given the geographical or typographical name of a region if it is produced within the boundaries of the region stated in the name.
- 7.1.6 It is permitted to classify honey according to the blossom or plant, when most of the its organoleptic, physiochemical and microscopic ingredients derive from that source.
- 7.1.7 When honey is classified according to its blossom or plant source (clause 7.1.6) the common name or the plant name must be close to the name of the product.
- 7.1.8 When honey is classified according to its blossom or plant source, or according to the name of the geographical or typographical area, the name of the country where it was produced must be shown.
- 7.1.9 The additional nomenclature referred to in clause 7.1.10 below must only be used if the honey matches the aforesaid description, and mention must be made of the methods referred to in clause 7.1.11.2 and clause 7.1.11.3.
- 7.1.10 It is permitted to name a honey according to the method it has been extracted from the waxen comb:
- 7.1.10.1 Extracted honey, if it conforms to what is stated in clause 3.3.
- 7.1.10.2 Pressed honey, if it conforms to what is stated in clause 3.4.
- 7.1.10.3 Dried honey, if it conforms to what is stated in clause 3.5.
- 7.1.11 It is permitted to name honey in accordance with the following methods:
- 7.1.11.1 Honey in a liquid state, or granulated state, or a blend of them both.
- 7.1.11.2 Comb honey, if it conforms to what is stated in clause 3.6.
- 7.1.11.3 Honey-comb sections or blocks of it in liquid honey, if it conforms to what is stated in clause 3.7.

7.1.12 Filtered honey, if it conforms to what is stated in clause 3.8. This must be detailed on the label.

7.2 Labels on containers not intended for retail sale.

7.2.1 Without prejudice to what is stated in the Gulf Standard Specification referred to in clause 2.9, there must be placed on the label on the containers the name of the product, the production code, and the name and address of the producer and the factory or packer. As far as the remainder of the requirements referred to in clause 7.1 are concerned, these may be stated on the containers or in the documentation associated with the containers.

TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY

*[English]**[Arabic]*

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Honey | Honey |
| Blossom or nectar honey | Blossom or nectar honey |
| Comb honey | Comb honey |
| Granulated honey | Granulated honey |
| Honeydew honey | Honeydew honey |
| Pressed honey | Pressed honey |
| Extracted honey | Extracted honey |
| Diastase activity | Diastase activity |
| Effervescence | Effervescence |
| Schade Units | Schade Units |
| Reduced sugars | Reduced sugars |
| Inverted sugar | Inverted sugar |
| Heather honey (Calluna) | Heather honey (Calluna) |
| False Acacia honey | False Acacia honey |
| Borage honey | Borage honey |
| French Honeysuckle honey | French Honeysuckle honey |
| Menzies Banksia honey | Menzies Banksia honey |
| Organoleptic | Organoleptic |
| Physiochemical | Physiochemical |
| Ling Heather | Ling Heather |
| Manuka or Jelly bush | Manuka or Jelly bush |

[English]

[Arabic]

References

References

Revised Codex Standard For Honey
No. 12/1981, Rev. 1 (1987), Rev. 2 (2001)

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No. 12/1981, Rev. 1 (1987), Rev.
2 (2001)