



RAW HONEY

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See also:

Manuka Honey
Master Cleanser
Bee Pollen

Books:

[Two Million Blossoms: Discovering the Medicinal Benefits of Honey](#)
by Kristen Traynor
[Health and Healing with Bee Products](#) by C. Broadhurst
[The Honey Prescription: The Amazing Power of Honey as Medicine](#)
[Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture](#)
[The Backyard Beekeeper](#) by Kim Flottum
[A Spring Without Bees](#) by Michael Schacker

Articles:

Websites:

Audio/Video:

David Wolfe: The Miraculous Healing Power of Honey
<http://youtu.be/QqJdmeTfo2s>

Publications:

Organizations:

People:

Integral Nutrition: Raw Honey as a Medicinal Superfood

Conventional:

Pasturized Mass-Marketed "Honey"

Terms:

THE BENEFITS OF RAW HONEY

Saturday, April 07, 2012 by: Luella May

Source: www.naturalnews.com

(When we look at the word "raw", we associated it with the preservation of important vitamins, minerals and enzymes. Just as raw vegetables are preferable because of their nutritional content, the same is true of honey. Raw honey is honey that has not been heated, pasteurized or processed in any way. The differences between raw and pasteurized honey are substantial. Raw honey is an alkaline-forming food that contains natural vitamins, enzymes, powerful antioxidants and other important natural nutrients. These are the very nutrients that are destroyed during the heating and pasteurization process. In fact, pasteurized honey is equivalent to and just as unhealthy as eating refined sugar.

Raw honey has anti-viral, anti-bacterial, and anti-fungal properties. It promotes body and digestive health, is a powerful antioxidant, strengthens the immune system, eliminates allergies, and is an excellent remedy for skin wounds and all types of infections. Raw honey's benefits don't stop there. Raw honey can also stabilize blood pressure, balance sugar levels, relieve pain, calm nerves, and it has been used to treat ulcers. Raw honey is also an expectorant and anti-inflammatory and has been known to effectively treat respiratory conditions such as bronchitis and asthma.

Raw honey purchased from a local source is an excellent way of treating seasonal allergies. Local honey is preferred for treating allergies because the likelihood is great that it will contain small amounts of the specific pollens an individual may be allergic to.

RAW HONEY IS AN EFFECTIVE NATURAL REMEDY FOR A VARIETY OF CONDITIONS

For centuries, honey has been used to treat all sorts of ailments. It can be applied topically to heal wounds and rashes, or it can be taken internally to treat infections and address other health concerns. Although there are numerous remedies, the following are popular remedies for common everyday conditions.

For skin burns, rashes, and abrasions, place a honey poultice over the affected area.

Raw honey is also an effective treatment for acne. A small amount placed on blemishes and acne nightly will often clear the skin in a short period of time. Washing your face with honey will also leave you with sparkling, clean, soft skin.

Raw honey's antibiotic properties are effective in treating colds and sore throats. Raw honey coats the throat and reduces irritation. For blocked sinuses, mix a teaspoon of honey in a pot of hot water, put a towel over your head, and just inhale the steam.

To treat allergies, take a teaspoon of raw honey a couple of times a day starting a few months prior to allergy season.

THE MANY VARIETIES OF HONEY

There are many varieties of honey, some of which are used to treat specific health conditions. Manuka honey has strong anti-bacterial properties and is used to treat a variety of conditions which include colds, sore throats, indigestion, stomach ulcers, and acne.

Acacia honey cleanses the liver, promotes intestinal health, and reduces inflammation in the respiratory tract.

Buckwheat honey, a strong tasting and dark honey, has strong antioxidant properties. Unfortunately, Buckwheat Honey is very scarce, especially in the United States. An alternative would be Red Gum Honey that also has strong antioxidant properties.

Eucalyptus honey can be used to prevent colds and headaches.

Heather honey has been used since ancient times for its medicinal properties. This honey contains a high level of protein.

Linden honey is known for its sedative and antiseptic properties. It is used to treat anxiety, insomnia, colds, coughs, and bronchitis.

Neem honey is highly esteemed in Ayurveda for its medicinal properties. Neem Honey is used to treat high blood pressure, diabetes, skin conditions, periodontal infections, throat infections and allergies.

Sources:

<http://www.benefits-of-honey.com/raw-honey.html>

<http://www.carlislehoney.com/allergies.htm>

<http://www.drgrotte.com/honey-medicine.shtml>

About the author:

Luella May is a natural health advocate helping people to heal naturally. Luella is in the midst of editing her ebook, "The 8 Invisible Stains of Our Souls" which will be available in the next few months. She partners with Tony Isaacs, who authors books and articles about natural health including "[Cancer's Natural Enemy](#)" and "[Collected Remedies](#)" Luella contributes to [The Best Years in Life](#) website for baby boomers and others wishing to avoid prescription drugs and mainstream managed illness and live longer, healthier and happier lives naturally. Luella co-moderates the CureZone "[Ask Tony Isaacs featuring Luella May](#)" forum as well as the Yahoo Health Group "[Oleander Soup](#)" and hosts her own yahoo group focusing on the natural wellbeing of pets "[The Best Years in Life Natural Health for Pets](#)"

RAW HONEY IS TASTY AND HEALTHY!

Source: www.globalhealingcenter.com



Honey has been used for centuries for its healing properties and sweet flavor. Honey is much sweeter than table sugar and is better for you.

When possible, it's best to buy locally grown, organic, raw honey. This will be produced by bees in or near the environment you live. Consuming foods from the area you live is beneficial as they contain the immune stimulating properties needed for your body to adapt to its environment.

Fresh, raw honey will also be tastier, and more potent. When you buy from local independent farmers you help your local economy.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF HONEY

As a healing remedy, raw honey can address multiple issues. There are far more benefits of honey than I can include here but here are some of the more interesting benefits you may not know about.

- Organic, raw honey can provide an energy boost. Its carbohydrates supply energy and strength and it can boost your endurance and reduce muscle fatigue.
- Honey is a great aid in relieving morning sickness, reportedly even more effective than traditional soda crackers.
- Honey is good for sore throats, laryngitis and pharyngitis.
- Honey and cinnamon can help in many areas including relief from bladder infections, arthritis, upset stomach and bad breath. It's even supposed to be able to slow down hair loss.
- Raw honey can be used as a medication for issues related to male impotence and female infertility. Warm raw goat milk and raw honey is believed to increase sperm count considerably.
- A salve made of honey, for diabetic ulcers, has been proven effective when other topical antibiotics are not well tolerated. It can be applied to eczema, canker sores or bleeding gums.
- Honey and apple cider vinegar can be used for many ailments like stomach aches, constipation and even migraines.
- Honey and lemon goes to work in the body shifting the extra fat stores, thus making it usable energy for regular body functions. Honey is cholesterol-free and can reportedly help keep cholesterol levels in check
- Raw honey has a viscous texture due to its low water content. It is a poor environment for bad bacteria to grow and is a good natural preservative.

Raw honey is a remarkable natural substance that is receiving a lot of well deserved attention. Seek out local markets for organic goods to get the freshest products. Support your local independent farmers; helping them to stay in business is good for them and for your economy.

PRECAUTIONS

Honey contains a natural presence of botulinum endospores, therefore, children under one year old should not be given honey. Before the age of twelve months, a child's intestinal tract is not mature enough to inhibit the growth of Clostridium botulinum, which is often found in honey. No honey, in any form, should be given to babies younger than one.

Recommended Reading:

- [Is Agave Nectar Safe?](#)
- [10 Foods that Detox the Body](#)
- [7 Healthy Berries you should add to your diet](#)
- [Dr. Group's Benefits of Raw Honey Segment from April 26, 2012 HealthRadio.net Appearance](#)

LIQUID GOLD: YOUR GUIDE TO HONEY

Source: www.doctoroz.com By [Kate Geagan, MS, RD](#)



Called "the nectar of the Gods" by ancient Greeks, honey is one of the most multifaceted staples in your pantry. It can work as a beauty elixir (used in facial masks or to soothe scars), but, above all, it is a delicious, healing food. Bees are responsible for one of the most sacred acts of nature: taking nectar from flowers and transforming it into honey, through interactions with enzymes in their saliva and digestion.

Honey ranges from colorless to a deep shade of caramel. It's mild to richly complex in taste. Think of honey like a fine wine: Its color, flavor and aroma are uniquely dependent on the nectar of the flowers the bees visited, connecting you with a taste of a region. And with the growing interest in foods plucked straight from nature, not to mention the growing science behind its health benefits (research suggests raw honey helps kill H. pylori bacteria that cause ulcers, for instance), honey is an amazing superfood. Honey is also a straightforward sweetener, a 100% natural, right-from-the-earth food – from hive to table, if you will.

Here's the lowdown on "liquid gold" and what you need to know.

Honeycomb

This is as pure as it gets. Dubbed by honey enthusiasts as “nature’s perfect package,” most people are surprised to learn that these wax combs are cut straight from the hive and completely edible. While it may seem a bit waxy to some (you can just chew it until the flavor is gone and then discard the rest), the comb has an intense honey flavor that is delicious; look for it at your farmers market or favorite natural foods store. A word of advice: Be sure to put it on a plate – once it’s cut, the comb will start oozing honey.

Raw Honey

Many naturopaths and nutrition experts (myself included) suggest choosing raw honey for optimal health and beauty benefits. Raw honey is never strained, filtered or heated. Research suggests it’s loaded with many trace minerals, organic enzymes, antioxidants, plus antibacterial and anti-fungal properties that make it a powerful package of health. Its rich origins mean that it’s loaded with more interesting taste and flavor.

Raw honey is a shining example of food as medicine. Your grandmother’s home remedy of dosing you with a bit of honey for your cough, for instance, seems to have some science behind it. Honey has promising evidence as a cough suppressant, not to mention a favorite alternative topical remedy for cuts and scrapes.

Look for honey labeled “Raw Honey” in your favorite grocery store or farmer’s market. If it crystallizes in your pantry over time, you can still enjoy it that way (it just means the glucose in the honey has precipitated out of the liquid); if you prefer a more liquid honey, simply place the jar into a warm water bath and stir gently until the crystals dissolve.

Caution: The American Academy of Pediatrics advises that children age 1 and under should not be given honey whatsoever, as it can potentially carry spores of the toxin *Clostridium botulinum*, raising the risk of infantile botulism.

Manuka Honey

There’s been intriguing research looking more closely at Manuka honey. This darker, stronger-flavored honey is harvested from bees that gather nectar in areas populated with the Manuka bush, a type of shrub which grows in New Zealand. Manuka honey seems to hold particular promise as an anti-bacterial treatment and in helping to treat burns, ulcers and gingivitis.

Manuka honey is sometimes promoted to cancer patients as having miraculous anti-cancer properties. Patients should proceed with caution and absolutely speak with their doctors before adding anything to their health-care regimens.

Royal Jelly

Consumed as a health food around the world, this prized milky-white cream is rich in an array of nutrients, including B vitamins, amino acids, sugars, minerals and fatty acids. Royal jelly is a food secretion made by worker bees and is the exclusive nourishment of queen bees throughout their life.

With a pedigree like that, it’s easy to see why royal jelly is seen as one of the most prized elements to

come out of any hive. It's a logical leap to assume if it's the "bee's knees," we should be eating it, too. So, should you? Here's my opinion: Given its role in nature as a unique nutrient powerhouse for the bee kingdom, it may indeed be a safe, nutrient-rich addition to your diet.

Royal jelly has spawned a robust online and supplement industry filled with inflated claims ranging from curing sexual impotence to balancing hormones, so proceed with caution.

Women should also note that royal jelly may have possible estrogenic effects (some research has suggested it may have an effect on fertility and menopausal symptoms). Women with estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer should not consume royal jelly without first consulting their doctor. Also, you may want to avoid it if you have a history of bee allergies.

There's certainly some encouraging science about the health benefits of royal jelly. One of the strongest areas is in the promise of possibly lowering cholesterol. Additionally, many in the beauty industry claim it can stimulate collagen and be used topically or ingested for skin-boosting benefits.

Remember that a diet rich in darkly colored fruits and vegetables, fish, legumes and whole grains is a proven path to supercharged health. You should take the approach of "healthy diet plus royal jelly" rather than "drive thru plus royal jelly" as your strategy for success.

How Much Honey Is Healthy?

With all the buzz around sugars these days, it's important to remember that like any sweetener, honey should be savored in small amounts. The American Heart Association recommends that no more than 10% of your total calories should come from added sugars, which for the average American woman translates into about 100 calories a day, or just under 5 teaspoons of honey. For context, consider the average American currently consumes roughly 22 teaspoons of added sugar per day – more than four times as much!

But honey does have some unique appeal: For one, this golden liquid is significantly sweeter than table sugar (about 25% sweeter), meaning you're satisfied with less. This can shave calories off of your morning cup of tea, your oatmeal (just add a drizzle), or even the amount of sweetener you need in a recipe when baking.

Another plus? Honey has long been loved by athletes as a source of a lower glycemic carbohydrate, which means it enters your bloodstream more slowly than other refined sugars, giving you sustained energy to power your performance. In ancient Greece, athletes feasted on honey and figs prior to the Olympic competitions; today, my colleague, a sports nutritionist for the Kansas City Royals, has her pro ball players eat honey sandwiches (with all-natural peanut butter and whole wheat bread) for sustained energy prior to a game. Personally, honey is a family favorite. My four year old eats it just because he loves it. As a mom, I'm proud (and it saves me a lot of trouble) that he's into the healthy stuff.

TESTS SHOW MOST STORE HONEY ISN'T HONEY

Ultra-filtering Removes Pollen, Hides Honey Origins

by [Andrew Schneider](#) | Nov 07, 2011

More than three-fourths of the honey sold in U.S. grocery stores isn't exactly what the bees produce, according to testing done exclusively for **Food Safety News**.

The results show that the pollen frequently has been filtered out of products labeled "honey."

The removal of these microscopic particles from deep within a flower would make the nectar flunk the quality standards set by most of the world's food safety agencies.

The food safety divisions of the World Health Organization, the European Commission and dozens of others also have ruled that without pollen there is no way to determine whether the honey came from legitimate and safe sources.

In the U.S., the Food and Drug Administration says that any product that's been ultra-filtered and no longer contains pollen isn't honey. However, the FDA isn't checking honey sold here to see if it contains pollen.

Ultra filtering is a high-tech procedure where honey is heated, sometimes watered down and then forced at high pressure through extremely small filters to remove pollen, which is the only foolproof sign identifying the source of the honey. It is a spin-off of a technique refined by the Chinese, who have illegally dumped tons of their honey - some containing illegal antibiotics - on the U.S. market for years.

Food Safety News decided to test honey sold in various outlets after its [earlier investigation](#) found U.S. groceries flooded with Indian honey banned in Europe as unsafe because of contamination with antibiotics, heavy metal and a total lack of pollen which prevented tracking its origin.



HONEY WITHOUT POLLEN

Here is a list of the honey tested by Food Safety News that showed no traces of pollen. Analysis showed that the absence of pollen was consistent regardless of the size of the jar. In some cases, the stores where the honey was purchased are not listed because the same brands can be found in many different outlets.

- American Choice Clover Honey
- Archer Farms Orange Blossom Honey
- Archer Farms Organic Classic Honey
- Busy Bee Organic Honey
- Busy Bee, Pure Clover Honey
- CVS Honey
- Fred Meyer Clover Honey
- Full Circle Pure Honey
- Giant Eagle Clover Honey
- GE Clover Honey
- Great Value, Clover Honey
- Haggen Honey, Natural & Pure
- HT Traders Tupelo Honey
- Kroger Pure Clover Honey
- Market Pantry Pure Honey
- Mel-o 100 % Pure Honey
- Natural Sue Bee Clover Honey
- Naturally Preferred Fireweed Honey
- Rite Aid Honey
- Safeway Clover Honey
- Silver Bow Pure Honey
- Stop and Shop Clove Honey
- Sue Bee Clover Honey
- Thrifty Bee Honey
- Valutime Honey
- Walgreen MEL-O honey
- Western Family Clover Honey
- Wegman Clover Honey
- Winnie the Pooh, Pure Clover



Food Safety News purchased more than 60 jars, jugs and plastic bears of honey in 10 states and the District of Columbia.

The contents [were analyzed for pollen by Vaughn Bryant](#), a professor at Texas A&M University and one of the nation's premier melissopalynologists, or investigators of pollen in honey.

Bryant, who is director of the Palynology Research Laboratory, found that among the containers of honey provided by Food Safety News:

- 76 percent of samples bought at groceries had all the pollen removed, These were stores like TOP Food, Safeway, Giant Eagle, QFC, Kroger, Metro Market, Harris Teeter, A&P, Stop & Shop and King Soopers.
- 100 percent of the honey sampled from drugstores like Walgreens, Rite-Aid and CVS Pharmacy had no pollen.
- **77 percent of the honey sampled from big box stores like Costco, Sam's Club, Walmart, Target and H-E-B had the pollen filtered out.**
- 100 percent of the honey packaged in the small individual service portions from Smucker, McDonald's and KFC had the pollen removed.
- **Bryant found that every one of the samples Food Safety News bought at farmers markets, co-ops and "natural" stores like PCC and Trader Joe's had the full, anticipated, amount of pollen.**

And if you have to buy at major grocery chains, the analysis found that your odds are somewhat better of getting honey that wasn't ultra-filtered if you buy brands labeled as organic. Out of seven samples tested, five (71 percent) were heavy with pollen. All of the organic honey was produced in Brazil, according to the labels.

The National Honey Board, a federal research and promotion organization under USDA oversight, says the bulk of foreign honey (at least 60 percent or more) is sold to the food industry for use in baked goods, beverages, sauces and processed foods. Food Safety News did not examine these products for this story.

Some U.S. honey packers didn't want to talk about how they process their merchandise.

One who did was Bob Olney, of Honey Tree Inc., in Michigan, who sells its Winnie the Pooh honey in Walmart stores. Bryant's analysis of the contents of the container made in Winnie's image found that the pollen had been removed.

Olney says that his honey came from suppliers in Montana, North Dakota and Alberta. "It was filtered in processing because North American shoppers want their honey crystal clear," he said.

The packers of Silverbow Honey added: "The grocery stores want processed honey as it lasts longer on the shelves."

However, most beekeepers say traditional filtering used by most will catch bee parts, wax, debris from the hives and other visible contaminants but will leave the pollen in place.

Ernie Groeb, the president and CEO of Groeb Farms Inc., which calls itself "the world's largest packer of honey," says he makes no specific requirement to the pollen content of the 85 million pounds of honey his company buys.

Groeb sells retail under the Miller's brand and says he buys 100 percent pure honey, but does not "specify nor do we require that the pollen be left in or be removed."

He says that there are many different filtering methods used by beekeepers and honey packers.

"We buy basically what's considered raw honey. We trust good suppliers. That's what we rely on," said Groeb, whose headquarters is in Onstead, Mich.

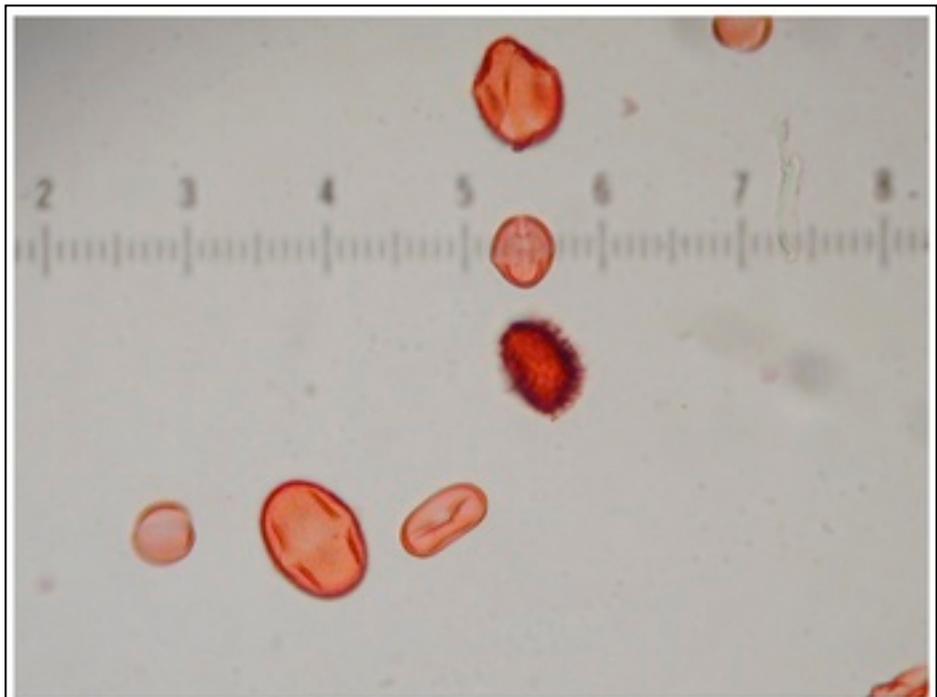
Why Remove the Pollen?

Removal of all pollen from honey "makes no sense" and is completely contrary to marketing the highest quality product possible, Mark Jensen, president of the American Honey Producers Association, told Food Safety News.

"I don't know of any U.S. producer that would want to do that. Elimination of all pollen can only be achieved by ultra-filtering and this filtration process does nothing but cost money and diminish the quality of the honey," Jensen said.

"In my judgment, it is pretty safe to assume that any ultra-filtered honey on store shelves is Chinese honey and it's even safer to assume that it entered the country uninspected and in violation of federal law," he added.

Richard Adey, whose 80,000 hives in multiple states produce 7 million pounds of honey each year, told Food Safety News that "honey has been valued by millions for centuries for its flavor and



This is how good honey looks under a microscope. A "local raw honey" packed by Wessels Honey near Portland, Ore. has pollen grains visible from several type of clover and wildflowers. The fuzzy looking item is a special spore that Prof. Vaughn Bryant adds to ensure that the complex, multi-step analysis to identify pollen is properly done. Microphoto by V. Bryant. © V. Bryant

nutritional value and that is precisely what is completely removed by the ultra-filtration process."

"There is only one reason to ultra-filter honey and there's nothing good about it," he says.

"It's no secret to anyone in the business that the only reason all the pollen is filtered out is to hide where it initially came from and the fact is that in almost all cases, that is China," Adee added.

The Sioux Honey Association, who says it's America's largest supplier, declined repeated requests for comments on ultra-filtration, what Sue Bee does with its foreign honey and whether it's ultra-filtered when they buy it. The co-op markets retail under Sue Bee, Clover Maid, Aunt Sue, Natural Pure and many store brands.

Eric Wenger, director of quality services for Golden Heritage Foods, the nation's third largest packer, said his company takes every precaution not to buy laundered Chinese honey.

"We are well aware of the tricks being used by some brokers to sell honey that originated in China and laundering it in a second country by filtering out the pollen and other adulterants," said Wenger, whose firm markets 55 million pounds of honey annually under its Busy Bee brand, store brands, club stores and food service.

"The brokers know that if there's an absence of all pollen in the raw honey we won't buy it, we won't touch it, because without pollen we have no way to verify its origin."

He said his company uses "extreme care" including pollen analysis when purchasing foreign honey, especially from countries like India, Vietnam and others that have or have had "business arrangements" with Chinese honey producers.

Golden Heritage, Wenger said, then carefully removes all pollen from the raw honey when it's processed to extend shelf life, but says, "as we see it, that is not ultra-filtration.

"There is a significant difference between filtration, which is a standard industry practice intended to create a shelf-stable honey, and ultra-filtration, which is a deceptive, illegal, unethical practice."

Some of the foreign and state standards that are being instituted can be read to mean different things, Wenger said "but the confusion can be eliminated and we can all be held to the same appropriate standards for quality if FDA finally establishes the standards we've all wanted for so long."

Groeb says he has urged FDA to take action as he also "totally supports a standard of Identity for honey. It will help everyone have common ground as to what pure honey truly is!"

What's Wrong With Chinese Honey?

Chinese honey has long had a poor reputation in the U.S., where - in 2001 - the Federal Trade Commission imposed stiff import tariffs or taxes to stop the Chinese from flooding the marketplace with dirt-cheap, heavily subsidized honey, which was forcing American beekeepers out of business.

To avoid the dumping tariffs, the Chinese quickly began transshipping honey to several other countries, then laundering it by switching the color of the shipping drums, the documents and labels to indicate a bogus but tariff-free country of origin for the honey.

Most U.S. honey buyers knew about the Chinese actions because of the sudden availability of lower cost honey, and little was said.

The FDA -- either because of lack of interest or resources -- devoted little effort to inspecting imported honey. Nevertheless, the agency had occasionally either been told of, or had stumbled upon, Chinese honey contaminated with chloramphenicol and other illegal animal antibiotics which are dangerous, even fatal, to a very small percentage of the population.

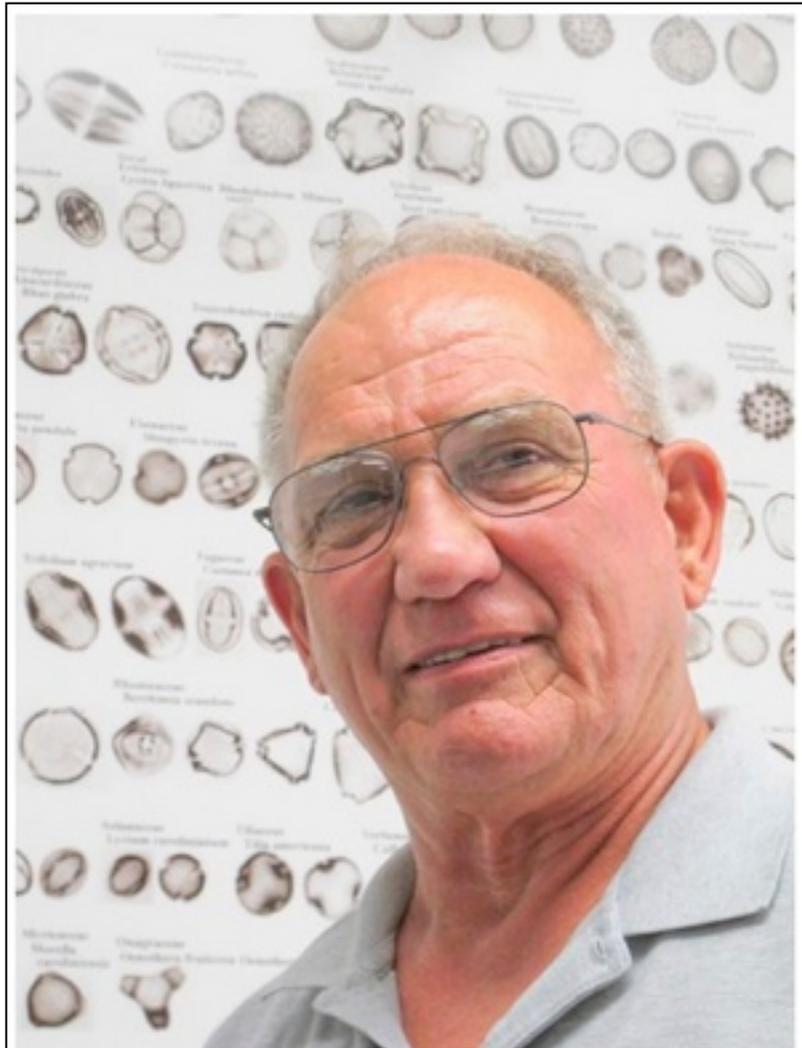
Mostly, the adulteration went undetected. Sometimes FDA caught it.

In one instance 10 years ago, contaminated Chinese honey was shipped to Canada and then on to a warehouse in Houston where it was sold to jelly maker J.M. Smuckers and the national baker Sara Lee.

By the time the FDA said it realized the Chinese honey was tainted, Smuckers had sold 12,040 cases of individually packed honey to Ritz-Carlton Hotels and Sara Lee said it may have been used in a half-million loaves of bread that were on store shelves.

Eventually, some honey packers became worried about what they were pumping into the plastic bears and jars they were selling. They began using in-house or private labs to test for honey diluted with inexpensive high fructose corn syrup or 13 other illegal sweeteners or for the presence of illegal antibiotics. But even the most sophisticated of these tests would not pinpoint the geographic source of the honey.

Food scientists and honey specialists say pollen is the only foolproof fingerprint to a honey's source.



Vaughn Bryant, professor of anthropology and director of Texas A&M's Palynology Laboratory, one of the nation's top pollen experts, tested dozens of samples of honey purchased in scores of outlets in 10 states and the District of Columbia.

Photo © Food Safety News

Federal investigators working on criminal indictments and a very few conscientious packers were willing to pay stiff fees to have the pollen in their honey analyzed for country of origin. That complex, multi-step analysis is done by fewer than five commercial laboratories in the world.

But, Customs and Justice Department investigators told Food Safety News that whenever U.S. food safety or criminal experts verify a method to identify potentially illegal honey - such as analyzing the pollen - the laundering operators find a way to thwart it, such as ultra-filtration.

The U.S. imported 208 million pounds of honey over the past 18 months. Almost 60 percent came from Asian countries - traditional laundering points for Chinese honey. This included 45 million pounds from India alone.

And websites still openly offer brokers who will illegally transship honey and scores of other tariff-protected goods from China to the U.S.

FDA's Lack of Action

The Food and Drug Administration weighed into the filtration issue years ago.

"The FDA has sent a letter to industry stating that the FDA does not consider 'ultra-filtered' honey to be honey," agency press officer Tamara Ward told Food Safety News.

She went on to explain: "We have not halted any importation of honey because we have yet to detect 'ultra-filtered' honey. If we do detect 'ultra-filtered' honey we will refuse entry."

Many in the honey industry and some in FDA's import office say they doubt that FDA checks more than 5 percent of all foreign honey shipments.

For three months, the FDA promised Food Safety News to make its "honey expert" available to explain what that statement meant. It never happened. Further, the federal food safety authorities refused offers to examine Bryant's analysis and explain what it plans to do about the selling of honey it says is adulterated because of the removal of pollen, a key ingredient.

Major food safety standard-setting organizations such as the United Nations' Codex Alimentarius, the European Union and the European Food Safety Authority say the intentional removal of pollen is dangerous because it eliminates the ability of consumers and law enforcement to determine the actual origin of the honey.

"The removal of pollen will make the determination of botanical and geographic origin of honey impossible and circumvents the ability to trace and identify the actual source of the honey," says the European Union Directive on Honey.

The Codex commission's Standard for Honey, which sets principles for the international trade in food, has ruled that "No pollen or constituent particular to honey may be removed except where this is unavoidable in the removal of foreign matter. . ." It even suggested what size mesh to use (not smaller

than 0.2mm or 200 micron) to filter out unwanted debris -- bits of wax and wood from the frames, and parts of bees -- but retain 95 percent of all the pollen.

Food Safety News asked Bryant to analyze foreign honey packaged in Italy, Hungary, Greece, Tasmania and New Zealand to try to get a feeling for whether the Codex standards for pollen were being heeded overseas. The samples from every country but Greece were loaded with various types and amounts of pollen. Honey from Greece had none.

You'll Never Know

In many cases, consumers would have an easier time deciphering state secrets than pinning down where the honey they're buying in groceries actually came from.

The majority of the honey that Bryant's analysis found to have no pollen was packaged as store brands by outside companies but carried a label unique to the food chain. For example, Giant Eagle has a ValuTime label on some of its honey. In Target it's called Market Pantry, Naturally Preferred and others. Walmart uses Great Value and Safeway just says Safeway. Wegmans also uses its own name.

Who actually bottled these store brands is often a mystery.

A noteworthy exception is Golden Heritage of Hillsboro, Kan. The company either puts its name or decipherable initials on the back of store brands it fills.

"We're never bashful about discussing the products we put out" said Wenger, the company's quality director. "We want people to know who to contact if they have questions."

The big grocery chains were no help in identifying the sources of the honey they package in their store brands.

For example, when Food Safety News was hunting the source of nine samples that came back as ultra-filtered from QFC, Fred Myer and King Sooper, the various customer service numbers all led to representatives of Kroger, which owns them all. The replies were identical: "We can't release that information. It is proprietary."

One of the customer service representatives said the contact address on two of the honeys being questioned was in Sioux City, Iowa, which is where Sioux Bee's corporate office is located.



This is a promotion by Sioux Honey Association to promote American honey. The Sue Bee cooperative, based in Sioux City, Iowa, refused repeated calls from Food Safety News to discuss whether the millions of pounds of foreign honey it buys comes with the telltale pollen already removed or if they do it during processing. Source: Sioux Honey Association

Jessica Carlson, a public relations person for Target, waved the proprietary banner and also refused to say whether it was Target management or the honey suppliers that wanted the source of the honey kept from the public.

Similar non-answers came from representatives of Safeway, Walmart and Giant Eagle.

The drugstores weren't any more open with the sources of their house brands of honey. A Rite Aid representative said "if it's not marked made in China, than it's made in the United States." She didn't know who made it but said "I'll ask someone."

Rite Aid, Walgreen and CVS have yet to supply the information.

Only two smaller Pacific Northwest grocery chains - Haggen and Metropolitan Market - both selling honey without pollen, weren't bashful about the source of their honey. Haggen said right off that its brand comes from Golden Heritage. Metropolitan Market said its honey - Western Family - is packed by Bee Maid Honey, a co-op of beekeepers from the Canadian provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

Pollen? Who Cares?

Why should consumers care if their honey has had its pollen removed?

"Raw honey is thought to have many medicinal properties," says Kathy Egan, dietitian at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. "Stomach ailments, anemia and allergies are just a few of the conditions that may be improved by consumption of unprocessed honey."

But beyond pollen's reported enzymes, antioxidants and well documented anti-allergenic benefits, a growing population of natural food advocates just don't want their honey messed with.

There is enormous variety among honeys. They range in color from glass-clear to a dark mahogany and in consistency from watery to chunky to a crystallized solid. It's the plants and flowers where the bees forage for nectar that will determine the significant difference in the taste, aroma and color of what the bees produce. It is the processing that controls the texture.

Food historians say that in the 1950s the typical grocery might have offered three or four different brands of honey. Today, a fair-sized store will offer 40 to 50 different types, flavors and sources of honey out of the estimated 300 different honeys made in the U.S.. And with the attractiveness of natural food and the locavore movement, honey's popularity is burgeoning. Unfortunately, with it comes the potential for fraud.

Concocting a sweet-tasting syrup out of cane, corn or beet sugar, rice syrup or any of more than a dozen sweetening agents is a great deal easier, quicker and far less expensive than dealing with the natural brew of bees.

However, even the most dedicated beekeeper can unknowingly put incorrect information on a honey jar's label.

Bryant has examined nearly 2,000 samples of honey sent in by beekeepers, honey importers, and ag officials checking commercial brands off store shelves. Types include premium honey such as "buckwheat, tupelo, sage, orange blossom, and sourwood" produced in Florida, North Carolina, California, New York and Virginia and "fireweed" from Alaska.

"Almost all were incorrectly labeled based on their pollen and nectar contents," he said.

Out of the 60 plus samples that Bryant tested for Food Safety News, the absolute most flavorful said "blackberry" on the label. When Bryant concluded his examination of the pollen in this sample he found clover and wildflowers clearly outnumbering a smattering of grains of blackberry pollen.

For the most part we are not talking about intentional fraud here. Contrary to their most fervent wishes, beekeepers can't control where their bees actually forage any more than they can keep the tides from changing. They offer their best guess on the predominant foliage within flying distance of the hives.

"I think we need a truth in labeling law in the U.S. as they have in other countries," Bryant added.

FDA Ignores Pleas

No one can say for sure why the FDA has ignored repeated pleas from Congress, beekeepers and the honey industry to develop a U.S. standard for identification for honey.

Nancy Gentry owns the small Cross Creek Honey Company in Interlachen, Fla., and she isn't worried about the quality of the honey she sells.

"I harvest my own honey. We put the frames in an extractor, spin it out, strain it, and it goes into a jar. It's honey the way bees intended," Gentry said.

But the negative stories on the discovery of tainted and bogus honey raised her fears for the public's perception of honey.

She spent months of studying what the rest of the world was doing to protect consumers from tainted honey and questioning beekeepers and industry on what was needed here. Gentry became the leading force in crafting language for Florida to develop the nation's first standard for identification for honey.



More than 1,100 brands of honey are sold in the U.S. These are some of the brands Food Safety News had analyzed to see if the pollen had been removed. Photo ©Food Safety News

In July 2009, Florida adopted the standard and placed its Division of Food Safety in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in charge of enforcing it. It's since been followed by California, Wisconsin and North Carolina and is somewhere in the state legislative or regulatory maze in Georgia, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, New York, Texas, Kansas, Oregon, North Dakota, South Dakota, West Virginia and others.

John Ambrose's battle for a national definition goes back 36 years. He said the issue is of great importance to North Carolina because it has more beekeepers than any other state in the country.

He and others tried to convince FDA that a single national standard for honey to help prevent adulterated honey from being sold was needed. The agency promised him it would be on the books within two years.

"But that never happened," said Ambrose, a professor and entomologist at North Carolina State University and apiculturist, or bee expert. North Carolina followed Florida's lead and passed its own identification standards last year.

Ambrose, who was co-chair of the team that drafted the state beekeeper association's honey standards says the language is very simple, "Our standard says that nothing can be added or removed from the honey. So in other words, if somebody removes the pollen, or adds moisture or corn syrup or table sugar, that's adulteration," Ambrose told Food Safety News.

But still, he says he's asked all the time how to ensure that you're buying quality honey. "The fact is, unless you're buying from a beekeeper, you're at risk," was his uncomfortably blunt reply.

Eric Silva, counsel for the American Honey Producers Association said the standard is a simple but essential tool in ensuring the quality and safety of honey consumed by millions of Americans each year.

"Without it, the FDA and their trade enforcement counterparts are severely limited in their ability to combat the flow of illicit and potentially dangerous honey into this country," Silva told Food Safety News.

It's not just beekeepers, consumers and the industry that FDA officials either ignore or slough off with comments that they're too busy.

New York Sen. Charles Schumer is one of more than 20 U.S. senators and members of Congress of both parties who have asked the FDA repeatedly to create a federal "pure honey" standard, similar to what the rest of the world has established.

They get the same answer that Ambrose got in 1975: "Any day now."

HONEY'S ANTIMICROBIAL PROPERTIES AND BENEFITS TO WOUND HEALING

Source: <http://www.northernnevadaapiculturesociety.org/Honey%20Facts.html>

The use of honey as a wound dressing goes back to ancient times and has now been 'rediscovered' by modern medicine, according to Dr. Peter Molan of the University of Waikato, New Zealand. "It is a common observation in the many reports in medical journals that numerous benefits result from using honey to dress wounds," says Dr. Molan. The antibacterial properties of honey keep wounds free from infection, and the anti-inflammatory action of honey reduces pain and improves circulation, which hastens the healing process. "Honey stimulates the re-growth of tissue involved in healing," adds Molan, "making healing faster and reducing scarring."

CAN YOU USE HONEY TO STAY YOUNG?

Source: [New Scientist September 14, 2007](#)

Adding a dollop of honey to your daily diet may help to fight your aging process, according to researchers from the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand.

The researchers fed 2-month-old rats a diet containing 10 percent honey, 8 percent sucrose, or no sugar at all for 12 months. They were tested every three months to measure their anxiety and spatial memory.

Honey-fed rats seemed to hold up better to the effects of aging. Specifically:

- Honey-fed rats spent close to double the time in open sections of an assessment maze than sucrose-fed rats, which suggests they were less anxious.
- Honey-fed rats were more likely to enter novel sections of a Y-shaped maze, which suggests they knew where they had been before and had better spatial memory.

The researchers believe that a honey-sweetened diet may also decrease anxiety and improve memory in aging humans. The beneficial effects may be due to the antioxidant properties of honey.

The study was funded by Fonterra, a dairy company that's looking to market a honey-sweetened yogurt.

**Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour meeting at Newcastle University,
UK September 5-7, 2007**

[New Scientist September 14, 2007](#)