

Food Hygiene Requirements for Honey Producers

Public Protection Department
Bridgend County Borough Council
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Food Registration

Most honey producers regarded as a food business and will be required to register with the Local Authority 28 days before they commence trade.

Exempt if producer supplies only household, or charities and community groups on a very small scale.

Registration is free and will result in inspection by food safety officer to check compliance with law.

Food Hygiene Law

All food businesses required to comply with suite of food hygiene law which ensures high level of consumer protection with regard to food safety e.g.

- Food Safety Act 1990
- Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006
- EC Regulation 852/2004
- General Food Regulations 2004
- EC Regulation 178/2002

What to expect when an inspector calls

If a food business situated at home inspectors required to give at least 24 hours notice.

Inspection requires:

- Completion of a standard form.
- Asking detailed questions about practices.
- Examining written procedures and food hygiene training certificates.
- Visual inspection of premises, cleanliness and repair of structure and equipment and checking availability of facilities.
- Assessment for food hygiene rating

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

To promote consumer choice enforced under:
Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013
Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Regulations 2013

The food hygiene rating reflects the standards of food hygiene found on the date of inspection by the local authority and is not a guide to food quality.

Assessment of a Food Hygiene Rating

The food safety officer inspecting a business checks how well the business is meeting the law by looking at:

- **Hygiene** - how food is handled, prepared, cooked, reheated, cooled and stored
- **Structure** -the condition of the buildings, their layout, lighting, ventilation, cleanliness of it and equipment and availability of other facilities
- **Confidence in management**- training received, how food safety within the business is managed and how the business records what it does to make sure food is safe.

Food Hygiene Ratings

At the end of the inspection, the business is given a rating of '0' to '5' with '5' being the top rating.

The food safety officer will explain to the person who owns or manages the business what improvements are needed and how they can achieve the top rating of '5'.

Legal Requirements Under Rating Scheme

- Display sticker in a conspicuous place where it can be read by customer, preferably at or near the entrance to the business.
- You and any employees must tell a customer the rating if requested.
- Must remove a sticker from display once it is no longer valid.

Your rights under the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013:-

- **Contact inspecting officer** to discuss grievance
- **Appeal** - within 21 days of receipt of the inspection letter by completing the appeal form
- **Right to reply** - submit comments in writing by using the right to reply form which will be published on the Food Standards Agency website along with your score.
- **Request for rescore** - if you have addressed all the non-compliances raised in the inspection report, and can evidence this, then you can apply for a re-visit for the purposes of a re-score. The charge for a re-score visit is £150 which must be paid on application and must accompany the re-score request form.

What is required to secure good food hygiene

Must identify the following at each step of the process of honey production and how they will be prevented/ minimised:

- Bacteriological hazards
- Chemical hazards
- Physical hazards
- General hygiene standards

BACTERIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

- 1. Inherent** - due to the nature of the product
- 2. Contamination during processing** from:
 - unclean premises, equipment, utensils and containers
 - inadequate personal hygiene
 - other sources

1. Inherent Bacteriological Hazards

Honey is highly stable against microbial growth and can remain stable for long periods of time because of its:

- low water activity,
- low moisture content,
- low pH,
- antimicrobial constituents.

Main risk (low) is Infant Botulism

Infant Botulism

- Honey may contain spores of the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum* which are commonly found in water, dust, soil and air.
- These may actively grow in immature intestinal tracts of infants to produce powerful toxins that attack nervous system.

Prevention of Infant Botulism

NHS actively promote to new parents not to feed children under 12 months of age honey, including not dipping soothers in it.

Recommended that you label , “**honey should not be given to infants under 12 months of age**”. - but not legal requirement.

2. Bacteriological hazards from Contamination

Premises

In most instances a domestic dwelling will be suitable for use as a food business as long as it:

- has no access points for pests,
- has no animals permitted at time of use (including uncontrolled children)
- is kept in good repair, preferably with smooth impervious surfaces, cleaned before and after use.
- has adequate lighting,
- has a suitable supply of hot and cold potable water

Equipment/ utensils/ containers

- Equipment required to be cleaned in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.
- Kitchen sink may be used for cleaning equipment, but if part of dwelling should be disinfected before use for food business using two stage process.
- Dishwasher may be used as alternative to sink.
- Glass or plastic jars should be thoroughly cleaned before use in a dishwasher or hand washed then heated in oven to 90°C temperature to ensure sterilisation.
- Lids boiled in pan of water.

2 Stage Cleaning Process

Stage 1

Use a detergent to clean and remove any visible dirt followed by rinsing with clean water.

Stage 2

Disinfect using a disinfectant at correct dilution and contact time recommended by the manufacturer.

NB. Sanitiser can be used as both detergent and disinfectant but 2 stage cleaning must still be carried out. Disinfectant / sanitiser should be BS EN 1276 or BS EN 13697 accredited.

Personal Hygiene

- Preferable if hand wash basin is in kitchen but as low risk product may be located in bathroom.
- Hot and cold or suitable mixed running water to be provided.
- Liquid soap and disposable towels should be provided.
- Anyone with diarrhoea and / or vomiting should not be involved in the business until at least 48 hours symptom free.

Additional Sources of Bacteriological Contamination

- If domestic kitchen used no handling of dirty laundry etc. should take place at same time.
- Jars of honey should be kept away from raw foods.

CHEMICAL HAZARDS

- Paints and preservatives used in hives should be suitable.
- No honey that comes into contact with bee disease treatment should be used for processing.
- Cleaning products should be food grade, non-scented, rinsed where appropriate and stored away from food.
- Materials in contact with food should be food grade e.g. Sheeting for supers, containers for honey etc.

PHYSICAL HAZARDS

- ***Inherent hazards due to presence of insect parts, wax remains etc.*** – controlled by filtration using 600 or 400 micron filter
- ***Hazards introduced due to processing such as pieces of metal from defective equipment, glass from using broken jars*** - controlled by regular checks to identify any defects in equipment, jars etc. and dispose or repair as required.

NEARLY THERE!

Ensuring suitable controls and monitoring are implemented in relation to bacteriological, chemical and physical hazards will ensure a good score for first 2 elements of Food Hygiene Rating Scheme i.e.

- Hygiene
- Structure

However to have good score for “Confidence in management” you require evidence of training and a written food safety management system.

TRAINING

- All food handlers should have received formal food hygiene training to a level equivalent to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Level 2 Food Safety Certificate.
- It is recommended that refresher training is completed every 2 years.

FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A written procedure based on HACCP principles:

- Identify hazards at each step of the process including collection, extraction, heating, filtration and bottling.
- Identify controls required to be implemented to minimise/ eliminate hazards.
- Implement monitoring for controls.
- Establish corrective actions.
- Implement checks to ensure procedures are effective in controlling hazards.
- Keep suitable records commensurate with nature and size of business.

Examples of Food Safety Management Systems

- Safer Food Better Business
- Beekeepers Association HACCP
- FSA My HACCP

<http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/haccp>

Modify for use in your business

To Summarise

You require:

- Suitable training
- Food business to be registered
- Premises that meets legal requirements
- Understanding of food law and principles of good food hygiene
- Written food safety management system
- Implement suitable procedures to minimise risks

We are here to help!

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