

Alberta Honey

Nature's Advantage

Canada is the world's 12th largest producer of honey. The average honey yield per hive in Canada is almost twice the world's average due to our long and warm summer days and a vast supply of nectar producing crops.



Canada

Alberta



Alberta's Honey

industry produces other bee products, including:

- Beeswax for candles and household products such as polishes
- Beeswax for use in the pharmaceutical and dental industries
- Protein-rich pollen used as a diet supplement
- Propolis, an ingredient used in cosmetics and lip balms
- Royal jelly used in skin creams and lotions

Alberta is the largest honey producer in the country, producing over 40 per cent of Canada's supply. Alberta's leading role in food safety ensures a safe, quality product of the highest standards that meets consumer expectations.

Natural, Versatile and Tasty

Honey is a natural sweetener produced by honey bees from the nectar of flowers. It contains fructose and glucose that is easily digested by the body for a quick natural energy boost. There are no additives or preservatives in honey.

Honey uses less energy to produce and process than other sweeteners, essentially moving straight from the hive to the bottle, with little processing required.

Honey's natural properties make it a healthy choice as a condiment, a sweetener in beverages or in the creation of honey wine called mead. Honey can be substituted for sugar in canning or freezing fruit and in making jams and jellies. It is used as an ingredient in soups, salad dressings, sauces, dips, syrups, chocolate bars and candies.

Honey is also used in cooking and baking. Mild honey is ideal for baking or cooking. Baked goods remain fresh and moist for a longer period of time when honey is used.

Honey makes an ideal ingredient for skin and hair beauty products because it retains moisture. Research is ongoing related to using honey in the medical field for such things as wound treatment and the treatment of digestive problems.



Honey Production

Alberta has vast stretches of farm land used for growing canola, alfalfa, and clover. The abundant, sweet nectar from these floral sources provides rich sources for Alberta honey bees and produces beautiful, water-white to light-coloured, delicate tasting honey.

Alberta's long, hot summer days combined with rich floral sources, provides a perfect habitat for honey bees. These conditions help Alberta bees produce some of the world's finest and largest quantities of honey.

In Alberta, a honey bee colony typically produces 35 - 130 kilograms of honey per colony, compared to only 20 - 30 kilograms usually produced in the rest of the world.

Alberta's long, cold winters help beekeepers control pests. Honey bee colonies wintered in Alberta do not produce brood during winter months (the term brood is used to refer to the egg, the larva and the pupa stages of honey bees). During this time, the pest population will be minimal and only healthy colonies will survive severe cold temperatures during winter.

For keeping healthy bees, Alberta beekeepers are regulated under the *Bee Act and Regulations* by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. They rely on the use of integrated pest management and pest surveillance systems that promote the use of cultural methods, pest resistant bee stocks and less frequently pesticides if needed. Therefore beekeepers are able to maintain healthy bees that produce quality honey better than any other parts of the world.





Food Safety

Canada and Alberta's honey sector is supported by top-notch food scientists and a government that contributes to a rigorous approach to food safety and biosecurity. Alberta honey is regulated under the *Canadian Agricultural Products Act* by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Processing plants and facilities are also registered and regularly inspected by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to ensure adherence to the highest national food safety standards and meet consumer expectations.

On-Farm Food Safety and Biosecurity Programs are implemented across the province to ensure consistent high production standards for Alberta honey. Once a year, honey samples are analyzed to detect any adulteration with sugars and to determine levels of antibiotics and heavy metals. Alberta honey is monitored and tracked by inspectors – Canada's traceability system can trace honey shipments from the farm to the plant and beyond.

Buy Alberta Honey

Canadian prepackaged honey is classified by colour – white, golden, amber and dark. Honey packed in bulk containers has six classifications – extra white, white, golden, light amber, dark amber and dark.

Alberta exports honey to countries around the world. Alberta has a reputation as a supplier of quality honey and offers a variety of options to meet customer requirements.

Alberta's honey industry developed a special protocol for exporting honey to ensure all products are produced in Alberta and meet international standards and buyer and consumer expectations.

Honey can be purchased in bulk containers or packaged for retail. Alberta exports honey in liquid or creamed form. Alberta also supplies organic honey, certified based on standards and conditions that must be adhered to by both the producer and the packager.

Alberta's open business environment and natural advantages contribute to our strength as a major exporter of primary commodities and manufactured products. Alberta's export industry is served by a comprehensive network of highways, waterways, airways and railroads that greatly facilitates the timely, efficient shipment of products to countries around the world.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
www.agrifoodalberta.ca
E-mail: agrifoodexports@gov.ab.ca