

The Handling and Care of Honey After it is Extracted

In handling honey after it is extracted we work on the theory that the quicker it is canned, after the impurities have separated, the better the honey. After honey is well-ripened on the hive, it is a question whether it can be improved by any practical known method, but all will probably agree that the body and flavor can be practically ruined by a little carelessness, or inexperience in handling.

Keep Dampness Away From Honey.

With the method we are about to describe, dampness is the only thing we have to guard against; and, as our honey remains in the tank only one day, all we have to do, when through extracting for the day, is to shut up the extracting house as close as possible, so that the damp night air will not penetrate the house; in fact, when we open the door the next morning, the air inside will feel warm and dry, showing that a part of the heat of the previous day has been retained over night, making an ideal place for the honey in the tank to clarify itself. We prefer our tanks large enough so that an ordinary day's extracting will fill one full, and another, say, one-half full; then, when practical, one goes ahead in the morning and skims, and cans, the partly full tank, to make room for the forenoon's extracting; and then there are usually odd times, before the room is needed, to can up the honey in the other tank.

Skimming Honey.

In skimming honey we use a large iron spoon, the honey being of so heavy body it is not practical to use a very

large skimmer; then we do, not try to get the skimmings all off clean, unless it is the last time, when we want to draw all the honey out of the tank. It does not take long to run over a tank with this small skimmer, as we work right along lively, no matter if we do get quite a lot of honey with the skimmings, as we set the pail aside, and at night, when through uncapping, we empty it in the uncapping tank, and the honey will drip down through the cappings, while the particles of comb will stay with the cappings, where we want them, to be made into wax.

No Necessity for Straining Honey.

You will notice that, with this method of working, there is no need of a strainer. No matter how much you strain honey, it needs skimming, anyhow, so the straining does not help any; besides, it requires some work to arrange a practical strainer. Then there is the washing and care; more work all for nothing. The gates to our tanks are now placed close to the bottom. When we first began using tanks, we worked on the principle of drawing out the centre, so the gates were placed four inches above the bottom, but we soon found that there was nothing settled to the bottom, so now we place the gates clear to the bottom, and this allows us to draw that much more honey before the scum begins to come through the gate. Our benches that the tanks set on are made the right height, so that the gate will be about two inches above the 60-lb can when sitting on the scales.

Putting the Honey in the Cans.

We balance the scales at 62 1-2 lbs the 21-2 lbs being the tare. This leaves 60 lbs net for each can, and is much more convenient than filling the can full, then weighing, as some do. In canning honey from these tanks, one soon learns the number of cans that can be drawn. The idea is to draw all we can without getting any skimmings in the cans. We