



The Honey Story

Pure, honest food from Mother Nature.



Honey.

It's one of the most beautiful foods in the world. Called "Nectar of the gods", honey is full of the mystery of the ancient bee colony. Nearly every civilization has valued honey as a food, a medicine, and as a trading commodity. Composed of simple sugars, honey is excellent natural food for people of all ages. Of the millions of pounds of honey produced in Canada every year, over 70% is produced in Western Canada. It's the world's finest source of white, delicate clover-type honey. Bee Maid Honey from Western Canada is spreading its popularity around the world with its excellent flavour and high Canadian quality.

Types of Honey

Honey is sold in several different forms: creamed or solid, liquid and occasionally in the comb. Most honey in Canada is sold as 'creamed'. Creamed or liquid honey can be used interchangeably in recipes, but the liquid is usually preferred for dressing and drinks. Creamed honey is made by adding honey crystals to liquid honey. The processor controls the speed of crystalization to ensure the crystals are small and the honey smooth. Creamed honey, like liquid honey, is pure with nothing added. The flavour of honey is determined by the flower from which the bee collects the nectar.

Storage of Honey

Honey keeps almost indefinitely. Edible honey has been unearthed from Egyptian ruins. Today, much of our honey is pasteurized to destroy the yeasts that might allow honey to ferment. Honey should be stored in a dry place. It is not necessary to refrigerate it. Creamed honey is easily converted to the liquid form by placing the container of honey over warm (but not hot) water until the honey liquifies. If you purchase honey in a glass jar, you can also liquify it by running the sealed jar through a full



cycle of your dishwasher. One full cycle leaves the honey liquid in an easy pouring form. Honey can be frozen without changes in colour or flavour. Throughout history, fermented honey has been used in the preparation of drinks. Mead, a simple fermented honey drink of water, honey and yeast, was a favourite of the Norsemen. The Greeks made a drink with honey and apple juice. The Romans sometimes mixed their wine with water, spices and honey.

What Honey is Made Of

Honey is a natural sweetener. The sugars found in honey are largely the simple sugars - fructose and glucose. These are the sugars into which the sucrose of cane or beet sugars are broken down during the digestive process. These simple sugars require no further digestion before they can be absorbed into the blood stream. It is this quality of rapid absorption that makes honey a natural food for "quick energy". Athletes often use honey as a fast energy source. Honey also contains traces of minerals, vitamins and enzymes. However, these are not present in nutritionally significant amounts for humans.

The sugar fructose is almost twice as sweet as cane sugar. Fructose is difficult to obtain in a pure state, but occurs naturally in honey, mixed with other sugars. Fructose is also present in many fruits. It dissolves easily in water. It does not normally crystallize. The crystals found in honey are not fructose. Glucose is another type of sugar. It is almost half as sweet as cane sugar and it is this sugar that you see crystallized in honey. If the crystals formed quickly, they are usually small. If they formed slowly, they are coarse.





Honey Bees

The honey bee is one of the world's most fascinating food producers. Besides making honey, the energetic honey bee also provides services as a pollinator for agriculture. The average honey bee colony contains one queen (who may lay over 1,200 eggs a day), 60,000 or more worker bees who do all the hard work, and several hundred drones (male bees) whose purpose is to mate with the queen.

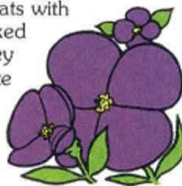
A worker bee lives about 6 weeks. During this time it gathers about one teaspoon of honey. Much time is spent on work within the hive, and the remaining time in fields gathering pollen, propolis and water. Nectar, as the bee gathers it, contains about 60% moisture. The excess is evaporated by rapid fanning of bees wings over an open cell, and is carried out by the bee's own ventilation system. Honey is one of the world's great natural wonders, useful to man in myriad ways, infinite in its variety of flavours.

Cooking with Honey

The earliest cookbooks of the Romans call for honey as a sweetener. Today, the ultimate in honey cookery is probably found in Turkey, Greece and the Arab world where honey-soaked pastries like baklava and sesame-seed honey cakes are great specialties.

The Chinese use honey in cooking too. Sweet and sour ribs, basted with honey and soya sauce, is only one of their many dishes.

Honey adds a special flavour when used to sweeten a freshly brewed cup of tea. Honey and butter melting on hot toast, orange and honey milk-shakes, honey-toffee apples, honey and orange juice over fresh strawberries are all taste treats with this natural sweetener. Even baked goods stay extra fresh when honey is substituted for sugar in favourite recipes.



Recipes

HONEY CHICKEN:

A taste of honey...and much more

- 1-2½ to 3 lb. cut up chicken
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- ½ cup melted butter
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup Bee Maid Honey
- 1 tsp. ground ginger

Brown chicken quickly on all sides in hot fat in heavy skillet. Combine remaining ingredients and pour over browned chicken. Cover and cook over low heat 30-40 minutes until chicken is tender. Baste occasionally. Serves 4-6.

HONEY VEGETABLES ORIENTALE:

Crisp but tender vegetables in sweet and sour sauce.

Kinds and quantities of vegetables used are flexible. This is especially delicious served with barbecued chicken or pork tenderloin.

- 6-8 large outside celery stalks (diagonally sliced)
- 2 large sweet red peppers (1" squares)
- 1 pkg. fresh spinach
- 1 head cabbage (shredded)
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 pkg. frozen snow peas or green beans
- 1½ cups chicken stock
- ¼ cup Bee Maid Honey
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons soya sauce
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1-5 oz. can water chestnuts, drained and sliced

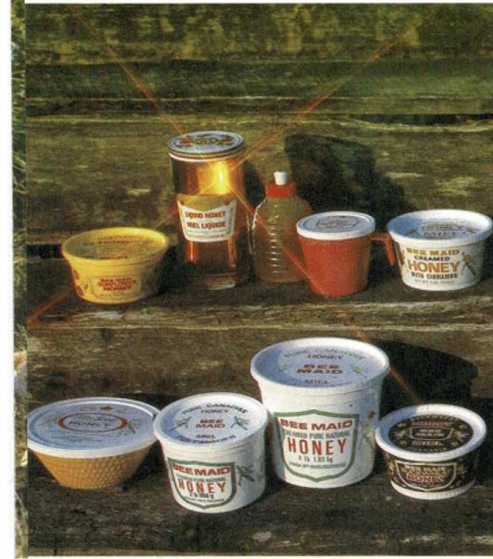
OLD FASHIONED HONEY SPONGE CAKE:

So moist - it needs no topping or icing - almost a bread.

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup Bee Maid Honey
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 cup tea
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Beat eggs well, add sugar and beat again. Add honey and oil and beat again. Mix flour, soda and blend alternately in mixer with tea and add vanilla. Bake in 2 loaf pans or one large pan and grease well. Bake at 325° F - 1 hour or more.

The Bee Maid family of honey products



Substitution Chart

1 cup honey = 1 cup sugar, but decrease the liquid in the recipe by ¼ cup for each cup of honey added. Add 1 tbsp. honey to your favourite cake mix recipe for added flavour. Lower the oven temperature 25 degrees when baking food in which honey has been substituted for sugar.