

# How we extract our honey

As explained in the leaflet 'How do bees make honey', the honey is ready for extraction once the sugars in the nectar have been processed and the water content is low enough. It is important not to extract honey if the water content is too high as the honey may ferment. The honey is ready to extract when the bees have capped the cells with wax.



The bees are removed from the frames using something called Bee Quick which is a non-toxic blend of natural oils and herb extracts. It does not harm the bees, they just don't like the smell!

The frames are moved a distance from the hive and as the bees are dialled in to the location of the main hive, when they leave the frames they will naturally return to the main hive leaving the frames empty of bees.

The first step is to carefully cut off the 'cappings' wax and this is done in an uncapping tray. The frame is placed in the hole in the bar across the tray and a flat bladed knife, called a Z knife, cuts the wax away.



'Cappings' wax is very pure, and I use it to make candles and bees wax food wraps



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There is a bath of warm water in the base of the tray and this melts the wax and honey that has been cut away from the frames. The liquid wax and honey goes out through the tube at the front and is collected in plastic trays.

Once cool, the solid wax floats on top and the honey is added to the honey extracted from the frames. The wax is used to make polish or candles.

The uncapped frames are then put in an extractor.

There are many different types and sizes of extractor, and they work on the principle of spinning the frames, throwing the honey out. The most commonly used type is a manually cranked spinner, but you can get ones with electric motors.



Once the frames have been spun, the honey comes through a valve at the bottom of the extractor.

The honey is strained through a stainless steel filter that takes out lumps of wax and various unwanted bits and pieces.

The honey is stored in sealed food grade plastic buckets until needed.

The honey is then decanted into a dispensing tank and filtered again.



## The final product

