

**November 2023**



**The Miami Valley  
Beekeepers Association  
Newsletter**



**Next Meeting:  
November 6 (Mon)  
6:30 PM at the  
Tipp City Public Library**

**Gadgets, MVBA Election,  
and Raffle**

Bring your best beekeeping  
gadgets or "hacks" to share

*No speaker at the final meeting  
of the year*

No Zoom link - please attend in-  
person for a chance to win  
prizes!

**Prizes at the November meeting include:**

- Hive tools
- Bee brush
- Queen clips
- Green paint pen (to mark next year's queens)
- Push-in queen cage
- Uncapping tool
- Honey gates
- Silicone kitchen utensils
- Mason bee houses
- Other fun finds from the OSBA Fall Conference!



**Nominations for positions on the Executive Board need to be sent to the President prior to the November meeting.**

Please send an email to MVBA

([miamivalleyba@gmail.com](mailto:miamivalleyba@gmail.com))  
OR contact Jeff Adler directly  
(call or text 719-352-5602 or email [spiff4455@gmail.com](mailto:spiff4455@gmail.com)).



**Sugar Bricks for winter feeding & moisture control**

***While there are many recipes, here are two reputable links:***

[www.mdasplitter.com/docs/candy.pdf](http://www.mdasplitter.com/docs/candy.pdf)

How to Make Homemade Sugar Bricks

([betterbee.com](http://betterbee.com))

<https://www.betterbee.com/instructions-and-resources/how-to-make-homemade-sugar-bricks.asp>

## Autumn Leaves and Yard Cleanup: Save Yourself the Effort & Help the Ecosystem

MVBA President — Jeff Adler

In my neighborhood lately, whenever there is a nice sunny day, I can guarantee I will hear several leaf blowers when I step outside. Homeowners spend hours blowing leaves around the yard and towards the curb to be picked up by the city. Or they make a large pile, shove them into huge garbage bags, and set them at the curb for trash day. Some folks burn them and, while I don't necessarily hate the smell, sometimes I can tell they are burning household trash as well.

Another fall chore: cleaning up flower beds, garden areas, dead tall grasses, and potted plants. Pulling out the tomato cages, dispatching some of the late weeds, and coiling up the hoses. I offer you an alternative to both of these autumnal tasks: leave the leaves to decompose, and forgo the garden cleanup until spring. Hear me out:

Leaves provide great ground cover for overwintering. A layer of leaves will provide some insulation to the ground beneath, like a cheap mulch. As they decompose, the leaves will provide nutrients to the soil and a place for beneficial decomposers and other helpful insects to overwinter. Personally, I use my lawn mower to mulch the leaves into the discharge bag and then I spread this over my raised beds and over my perennials. The mix of grass clippings and dead leaves is an excellent combination of carbon-rich "brown" items and nitrogen-rich "green" items. In the spring, anything that has not broken down can be worked into the soil.

In the garden and around your property, dead stalks of various plants provide hollow cavities that are used by beneficial insects to overwinter. Lady bugs, beetles, moths, praying mantis, spiders, even lightning bugs need protected environments to make it through. Butterflies and bumble bees also rely on leaf litter for protection. At the end of summer, mated queen bumble bees burrow only 1-2" into the earth to hibernate for winter. An extra thick layer of leaves is welcome protection from the elements. Cleaning up these areas can deprive you of helpful critters in the spring, so save your back and help out your local ecosystem!

Obviously it's fine to tidy up some areas, especially if it makes you (or the spouse or neighbors) feel better, but it's good to leave some areas more natural. Use the time saved to peruse some seed catalogs or read some beekeeping articles.

**Happy Beekeeping!!**

Reference: <https://xerces.org/blog/leave-the-leaves>

# Secretary's Page

by Donna Meade

Meeting commenced at the Tipp City Library at 6:30 PM led by Jeff Adler, President.

There were 19 people in person and 1 online via Zoom.

On Sept 26, Jeff gave a short presentation to the Tipp City Library's family night program about honeybees and where we get honey. It was fun and he enjoyed sharing pictures and knowledge with the kids and their parents. He also did a blind honey tasting of his honey vs store-bought.

Jeff is in the process of getting beekeeping books ordered to put into the library's circulation. He will provide an update at the Nov meeting and (hopefully) will have some books to share then.

No Treasurer's Report

Upcoming opportunities:

OSBA Fall Conference: Oct 27-28 in Wooster, OH -- registration is open now.

Good opportunity to order from suppliers and pick up in-person to save shipping cost.

Club elections and raffle are in November. Great opportunity to ensure our club's future and get involved.

Discussion:

Tom and Fran Davidson will be teaching a Beginning Beekeeping course in Springfield in January. It will be a Friday evening and a full day on Saturday. Details forthcoming.

George Doviak put out equipment from a previous honey extraction for the bees to clean up. The bees had absolutely no interest in it. Others agreed that when there are natural resources for the bees to forage, they will not visit what you have to offer. Ed DeVault said he has bees removing sugar feed from his hives and depositing it outside. He also said he had a hive swarm the day before the meeting.

Different types of hive feeders were discussed. Jeff noted in Fall you feed a ratio of 2:1 sugar water, and Spring is 1:1. However, don't feed liquid once the temperature starts dropping. Instead use sugar bricks or the mountain camp method of sugar on top of newspaper inside the hive.

What you should be doing in your hives now:

Winter prep: make sugar bricks, build quilt boxes for moisture management

Start feeding 2:1 syrup

Watch for robbing -- it can start quickly and be very destructive

When supers are off, good time to treat for mites (depends on treatment)

REMINDER: oxalic acid vaporizer is available for member use

Fall flow - how is/was it in your area? Very dry Sept

Good time to look for beekeeping workshops / classes

Prep for any holiday festivals -- honey and other products make great stocking stuffers

Guest Speaker was Barb Bloetscher, the recently retired State Apiarist/Entomologist from Ohio Dept of Agriculture (state inspector). Topic: What to expect when your hives are inspected

The Apiary Program Today -- Each County in Ohio has a trained Inspector. If you don't know who yours is, contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). Their role is to inspect for pests and diseases and stop the spread.

Typically, all apiaries are inspected annually. In yards with 20 or more colonies, 30-60% are inspected. In yards of less than 10 colonies, usually all are inspected.

Help your inspector by:

Registering your apiary by May 31<sup>st</sup> with the ODA.

Note on registration form when colonies will be ready for inspection (in new apiaries).

Be specific about apiary location.

Provide the best email and phone number, and reply if Inspector calls/emails you.

By law it is illegal to apply chemicals toxic to bees within ½ mile of registered hives while bees are foraging.

Register your hives with ODA and at <http://beecheck.org/>. Report suspected pesticide bee kill to ODA, Pesticide Division (614)728-6987.

Ohio Apiary Law requires an inspection each season for any beekeeper who sells Queens, nucs, packages or hives and a Certificate of Inspection (Health Certificate).

Have a Pest Management Plan and know the signs and symptoms of American Foulbrood, European Foulbrood and treat for varroa mites. Download the Guide [www.honeybeehealthcoalition.org](http://www.honeybeehealthcoalition.org) for varroa management guidance.

# Treasurer's report by Brian Willis

Checking Account		Total Holdings		Cash On Hand
Beginning Balance Checking Acct Oct 2023	\$ 6,090.78	\$ 6,220.78	\$ 130.00	Beginning Balance Oct 2023
Income				Income during Meeting
	\$ -		\$ -	Cash donation and member dues
	\$ -			
Total for Deposit	\$ -		\$ -	Total meeting income (cash/checks received)
<b>Total Income</b>		\$ -		
Expenses				
Check 1466 Penn State Sept Speaker	\$ (150.00)		\$ -	
Check 1468 Oct Speaker fee	\$ (100.00)		\$ -	
Check 1464 August Speaker Fee	\$ (45.00)			
Total Check Withdrawals/Debits	\$ (295.00)		\$ -	Total Cashbox Withdrawals
<b>Total Expenses</b>		\$ (295.00)		
Cash xfer (Deposit from Cashbox)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Cash Xfer to lessen Cashbox contents
Ending Checking Balance Oct 15 2023	\$ 5,795.78		\$ 130.00	Ending Cash Balance Oct 15 2023
Monthly total Net change		\$ (295.00)		
Previous month Net funds		\$ 6,220.78		
Sum balance should equal total holdings (Bank activity +/- Cash Activity)		\$ 5,925.78		This acts as a check to ensure activity = actual balances
<b>BA Total Holdings 15 Oct 2023 (Checking balance + Cash Balance)</b>		<b>\$ 5,925.78</b>		

## MVBA Elections

MVBA will hold elections at the November meeting as required by our club Constitution. This is a great way to get involved and help ensure the club's future. Positions and descriptions are:

- President - The duties of the President shall be to preside at all meetings. The President shall be a de facto member of all committees. In the event of a tied vote, the President's vote shall be weighted.  
NOTE: The President also secures speakers for each meeting.
- Vice President - The duties of the Vice President shall be to assist the President and preside at any meeting during the absence of the President.
- Secretary - The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings at all meetings and send a copy to all the board members via email. Keep a record of all active members and update the list as needed. Create any signup sheets needed throughout the year.
- Treasurer - Keep the list of active membership. Keep a record of all monies collected for the Association and all monies disbursed, and prepare an annual report for the first meeting of each year. There will also be an annual audit by a committee of three (3) members appointed by the President.
- Member At-Large (2 positions) - Member of the Executive Board.

These 6 positions make up the Executive Board.

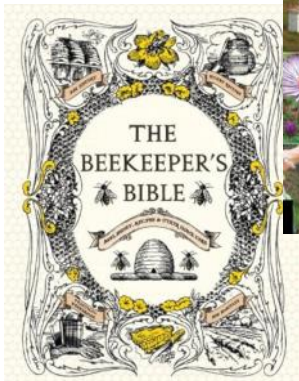
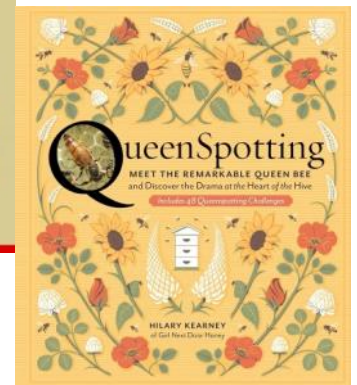
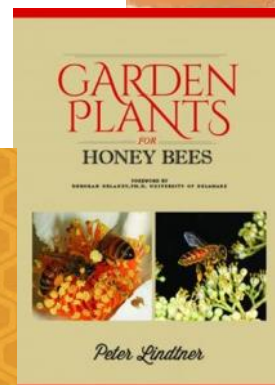
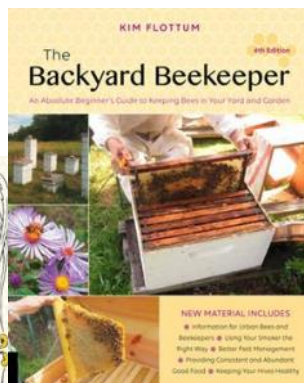
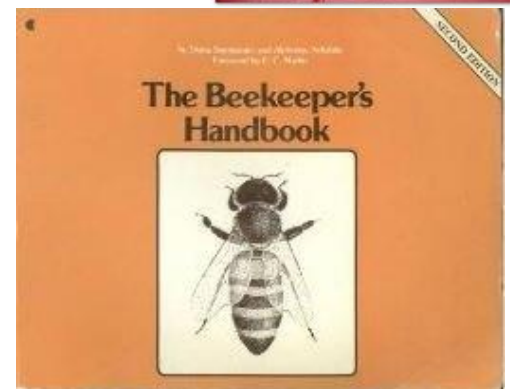
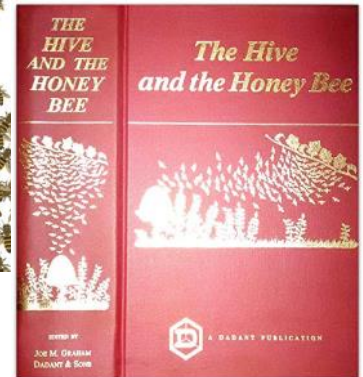
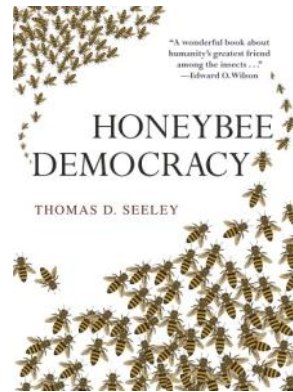
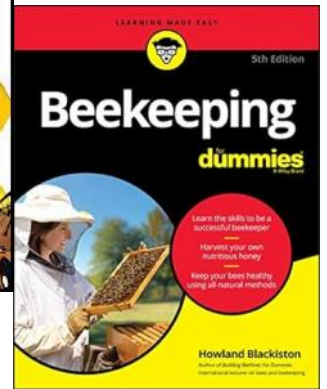
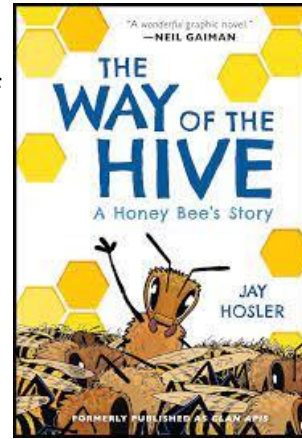
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As mentioned in Donna's minutes from the October meeting, MVBA is in the process of ordering a variety of beekeeping books to put into the Tipp City Public Library's circulation. We polled our members for recommended book titles and here is the list currently on order:

- ◇ The Way of the Hive: A Honey Bee's Story by Jay Hosler
- ◇ Beekeeping for Dummies, 5th Edition by Howland Blackiston
- ◇ Honeybee Democracy by Thomas Seeley
- ◇ The Hive and the Honey Bee by L. L. Langstroth
- ◇ The Beekeeper's Handbook, 5th Edition by Diana Sammataro and Alphonse Avitabile
- ◇ The Beekeepers Bible: Bees, Honey, Recipes & Other Home Uses
- ◇ The Backyard Beekeeper, 4th Edition by Kim Flottum
- ◇ The Little Book of Bees by Hilary Kearney
- ◇ Garden Plants for Honey Bees by Peter Lindtner
- ◇ QueenSpotting: Meet the Remarkable Queen Bee and Discover the Drama at the Heart of the Hive by Hilary Kearney



# Bees in Mythology

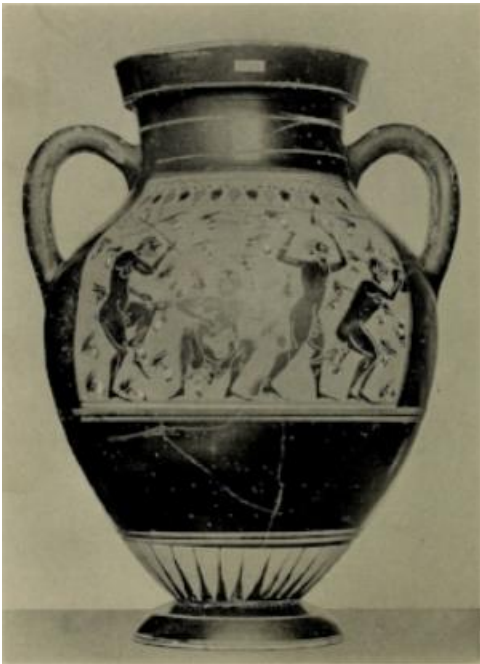
## The Bee in Ancient Greek Society (2000-300 BC)

Bees and honey were a major and persistent symbol in Greek culture and were often linked with knowledge, health, and power. Bees were considered servants of the gods and honey was worshipped due to its healing attributes and power. They are represented in jewelry, money, and statues of goddesses.

Bees played an essential role in Greek religious traditions. They, and the honey they produce, have many symbolic meanings and were featured in many stories of the Greek gods. One story tells of the birth of Zeus, King of the Gods. His father, the god Kronos, wished to destroy him, and so his mother smuggled him off to a secret cave on Mount Dicte. The cave was populated by sacred bees which fed the infant god honey. The god remained in the cave until he was grown, then dethroned his father Kronos and became the new king of the gods. Likely due to this story, one of Zeus's titles was Melissaos, or "bee-man". Zeus later rewarded the bees for their assistance by making them bright gold in color, and strong enough to resist cold and winds.

Like Zeus, the god Dionysus was raised in a cave and fed on honey. Today he is viewed as the god of wine, but his worship came earlier than wine, from the time when mead was the major alcoholic beverage. Even after wine took the place of mead, honey remained sacred to Dionysus. His followers had ivy-wrapped wands from which honey flowed. He was also credited with being the creator of beekeeping!

Honey is often referred to as a gift, the 'nectar of the gods.' Greek gods were often described or depicted drinking ambrosia. Historians have suggested that ambrosia was a representation of honey due to its color and taste. Ambrosia was believed to quench any thirst or hunger for the immortal being of Mt. Olympus. It did, however, have other purposes such as being used as a balm for gods to transfer immortality. For example in the myth Achilles was bathed in honey and passed through the fire so that all his mortal parts would die. However, because he was held by his ankle, this was the only vulnerable part of him. The mystique of ambrosia was reinforced in the myth of Tantalus who is punished for stealing the ambrosia and giving it to humans. Those who drank it would no longer have blood running through their veins but Ichor (the mythical fluid in the veins and arteries of the gods).



An ancient Greek amphora depicting four men being stung by bees after attempting to steal honey from the hives that nourished the infant Zeus.

Honey also played a very practical role in Greek society and in everyday life. It was a source of food and associated with celebration and good times. Honey was also widely used for healing wounds and preservation, essential requirements for health and prosperity. It is therefore not surprising that the bee and honey featured prominently on key material artifacts including jewelry, statues, pots and coins. Moreover, as Greek civilization spread this meant that the bee began to appear in other cultures such as that of Turkey on items such as coins which are themselves both a physical and symbolic representation of wealth.

Facts taken from <https://www.planetbee.org/planet-bee-blog//the-sacred-bee-ancient-greece-and-rome>

# How to Dehydrate Honey

from [Carolina Honeybees Charlotte Anderson](#)

## Need

Food Dehydrator

Silicone sheets or paper sheets for dehydrator

Food Processor

Honey

1 package Food Grade Desiccant

Perhaps you are already a fan of this sweet treat drizzled on ice cream, stirred into your morning coffee or added to those favorite baked cookies. Call it what you will: dehydrated honey, honey powder, or crystals-it is just another way to enjoy a remarkable substance made by bees. Consider trying something new and learn how to dehydrate honey at home.

## Instructions

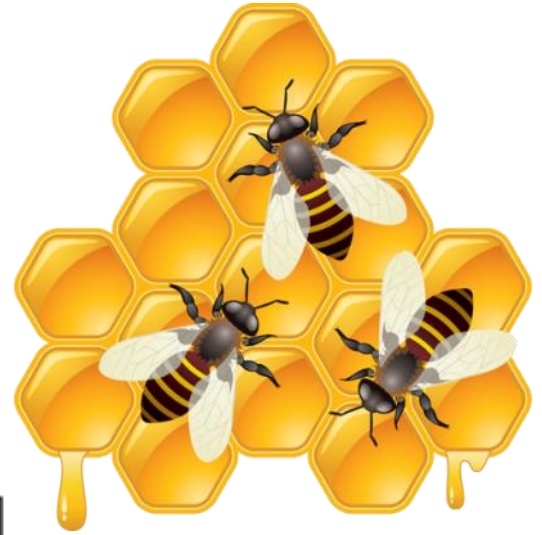
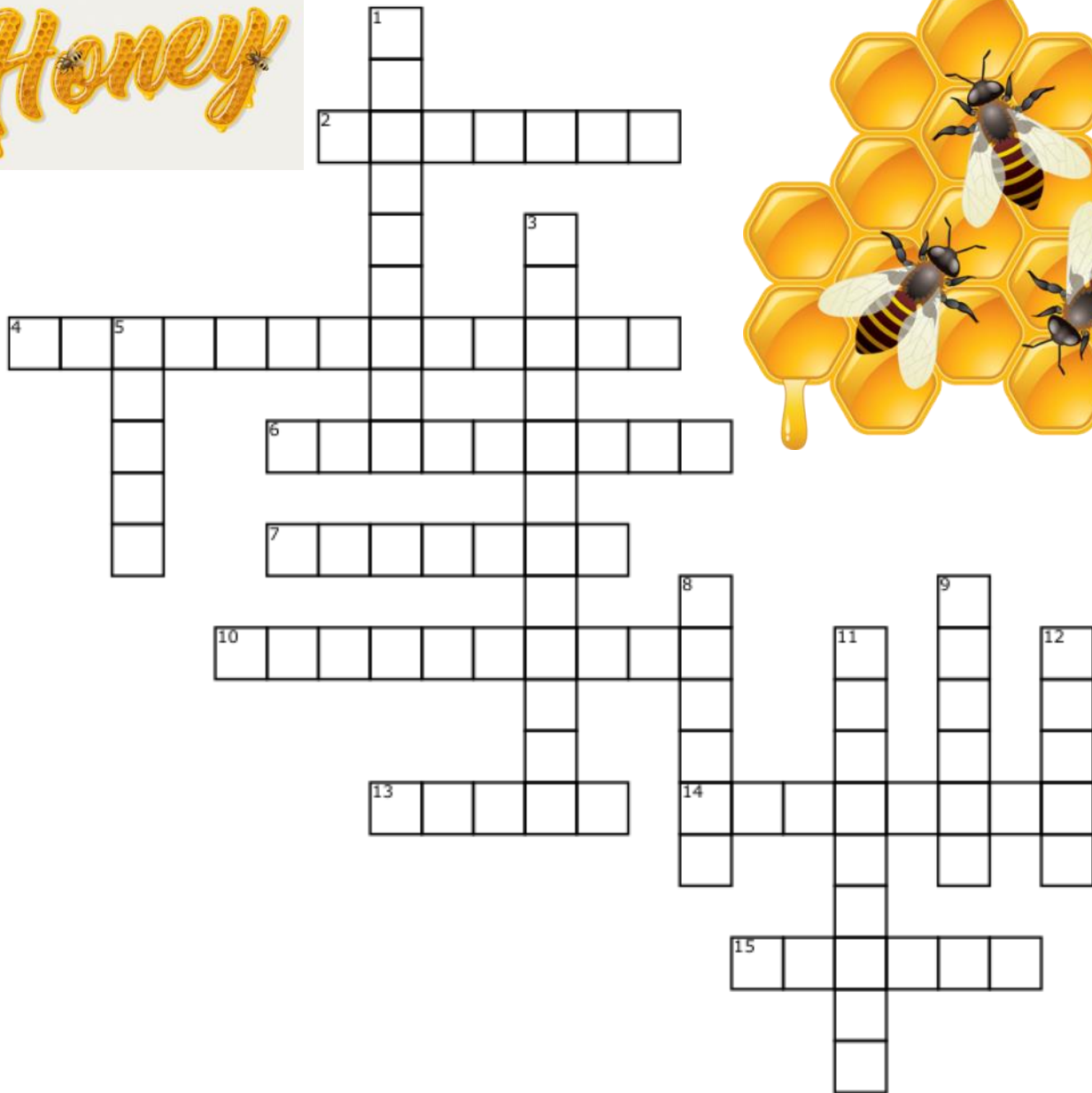
1. Prepare Silicone Sheets or Paper for trays. What you choose will depend in part on the type of dehydrator you have. You can use special silicone sheets that fit your dehydrator trays or parchment paper or freezer paper. If using paper, cut the sheets to fit your trays and place them in. Make sure your dehydrator is sitting on a level surface.
2. Pouring honey on sheets. Work with one tray at a time. Pour honey onto the sheet. You can pour it in the middle and spread outward or drizzle a pattern across the sheet-then spread. This can be aggravating because honey is naturally sticky! Start small, you can add a bit easier than you can get it off. If you want to add any flavors such as cinnamon or ginger -now is the time.



3. Spread product evenly. Use a spatula or large spoon to spread the honey across the sheet. It must not be thicker than 1/8" and it is best if it is spread uniformly. Avoid puddles and thicker spots as much as possible. Warming the honey a bit may help in spreading it across the sheet or paper. I hold one side down with a finger and use the spatula to spread the honey moving away from the held down side.
4. Set the dehydrator to 120° F / 40° C. Now for the part of that requires a lot of patience. Run the dehydrator until the honey is hard and crisp. How long it takes depends on your dehydrator, the humidity in the room, and the water content of your honey : 24-48 hours is common. Check it every 6 hours or so during the day to make sure it is not becoming burnt. It is finished when it is set and no longer sticky.
5. You want to have everything ready to crush and store as soon as the honey cools a bit. Do not leave it sitting around it will absorb moisture. If you are using Teflon dehydrator sheets , the dried honey will pop right off. Otherwise use a spatula to remove the chips of honey from the paper.
6. Grind to desired consistency. Grind using a food processor, mortar and pestle, or Magic Bullet. Any tool to get it to a granular or powdered consistency.
7. Storing dehydrated honey. Immediately, place in a tight sealing jar and toss in a food grade desiccant package. This helps prevent clumping – but clumping will occur.







**Across**

- 2.** When a seed plant flowers
- 4.** When something ceases to be seen or dwindles in population
- 6.** Someone who practices the maintenance of bee colonies
- 7.** Habitation or dwelling-place of bees
- 10.** Maintenance of bee colonies, commonly man-made hives

**13.** To wound/stick with a sharp-pointed, often venom-bearing organ

**14.** Typically sensitive to touch and taste; mobile appendages on the head

**15.** A type of honey

**Down**

- 1.** How plants breed
- 3.** The act of trying to protect or preserve something

**5.** A body of bees which fly off or move about together

**8.** a sweet liquid secreted by plants and the chief raw material of honey

**9.** A group of bees living in the same hive

**11.** A structure of rows of hexagonal wax cells

**12.** The bee responsible for laying eggs