



## Bee Products

### Commodity Characteristics and Legislative Authority

Bee products regulated under the *Health of Animals Regulations* are:

Beeswax (including wax cappings)  
Bee pollen  
Bee propolis  
Royal jelly  
Honeycomb  
Honey  
Beehive

The following bee products for **human consumption** are also regulated under the *Food and Drugs Act*, and the *Consumer, Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations*:

bee pollen  
bee propolis  
royal jelly  
honeycomb  
honey

Additionally, **honey for human consumption** is regulated under the *Canada Agricultural Products Act, Honey Regulations*.

**Livestock feed must be registered with the Feed Section of the Animal Health and Production Division of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.**

**Used beehives or used beehive equipment cannot be imported in Canada as per Section 57 of the Health of Animals Regulations.**

## Procedures:

For the purposes of this directive, the diseases of concern are: American Foulbrood, European Foulbrood and infestation with Small Hive Beetle.

1. Honey or other bee products (pollen, propolis, royal jelly and honeycomb) **for human consumption:**  
May be imported from any country, **with no Animal Health restrictions.**

## Rationale:

The risk of introducing and spreading exotic bee diseases through bee products imported for the above uses is considered to be low.

2. All bee products **for industrial use or livestock feed (including honey) or for bee feeding** (honey, pollen, royal jelly) :

May be imported from any country, provided:

- (i) they are accompanied by a certificate stating that they have proof of irradiation (1.5 megarads), **or**
- (ii) they are transported under seal of an inspector direct from the point of importation to an establishment approved by the Minister for irradiation. SOR/97-85, s. 46.

N.B.: Three irradiation plants exist in Canada: Isomedix (Steris), Whitby, ON 905-432-1106.

Iotron Industries, Port Coquitlam, BC 604-945-8838; Acsion Industries, Pinawa, MB 204-753-2255.

**From countries infected with Small Hive Beetle** (see annex 1) - products will be imported subject to inspection at the first point of entry. If found infected, the shipment will be refused entry.

3. **Beeswax** (including wax cappings) for any end use:
  - (i) May be imported from countries free of Small Hive Beetle without Animal Health Restrictions.

- (ii) May be imported from countries affected by the Small Hive Beetle (see annex 1), under the following conditions:
- beeswax is imported from these areas only between October 01 and March 31 of each year;
  - during the month of March, all wax shipments are to be frozen and shipped in refrigerated transports set to -20° C;
  - importation may only occur into facilities previously approved by a CFIA inspector for the rendering and processing of beeswax;
  - all shipments of wax will be received in an enclosed, non-insulated, unheated building, where it will stay until such time when it can be processed;
  - all receiving facilities must receive professional extermination services on a yearly basis, and the certificate of extermination must be presented to a CFIA inspector before approval of the facility;
  - any wax debris in the transportation vehicles or storage buildings swept from the floor must be disposed of properly and never swept outside;
  - shipments are subject to inspection for the small hive beetle at the first point of entry by an inspector of the CFIA.

## **Implementation:**

This directive relates to AH import requirements only and does not remove any obligation to the Canadian importer to comply with the import requirements of other **Canadian Food Inspection Agency** programs and/or other Federal, Provincial or Municipal government department.

## **Appendix 1: Countries considered infected with Small Hive Beetle**

- USA
- Australia
- All countries in the African continent

## **Appendix 2: Detailed commodity description and common usage**

### **Pollen:**

Pollen is the male germ plasm of plants. It contains proteins, fats, minerals and vitamins. It is collected by the bees from a variety of plants at different times of the year. It is the only protein source collected by the bees for feeding their brood.

Pollen is a nutritious food high in protein and has traditionally been collected from bees, frozen, cleaned and placed into retail packages and sold as a protein food supplement. It requires drying or freezing and careful storage to avoid damage by mites, wax moths or rodents. Collected pollen is used for bee feeding, human consumption and pollination of plants.

### **Royal Jelly:**

Royal jelly is secreted by the glands in the head of the worker bees and is fed to queens throughout their larval and adult lives, and to young workers and drone larvae. It is high in proteins and is synthesized with the aid of proteins from the pollen.

This jelly is collected by a skilled beekeeper via a labour intensive process, and is then frozen for later use. The substance may be sold in its raw form, a powder (dust or capsulated), or mixed in with other shelf stable products like honey. It is processed into a number of forms including capsules, tablets and cosmetics, and as a tonic and restorative. It requires some degree of skill to produce and must be refrigerated or frozen

### **Beeswax:**

Beeswax is a true wax, secreted by glands on the abdomen of worker honey bees. The wax is produced by the bees at the expense of honey production and it can take 6-8 pounds of honey to produce 1 pound of wax.

Beeswax is used in cosmetics, for cold creams, ointments, lotions, lipsticks, candle making and in the bee industry for replacement foundation that goes into frames for brood and honey production. It is also used in pharmaceuticals, waterproofing materials, polishes, furniture wax and light lubricants in manufacturing. Beeswax is processed by melting, straining, filtering, centrifuging, and/or bleaching and solidified in blocks of various sizes for shipping.

**Honeycomb:**

Natural beeswax is built by the bees with liquid honey sealed in the cells. It is composed of a mass of hexagonal wax cells built by honeybees in their nest to contain brood and stores of honey.

By sight, to tell the difference between honeycomb and beeswax, the beeswax will have very even consecutive cells which have been mass produced or stamped out.

**Honey:**

Honey is produced by the bees from the nectar of a variety of plants as well as from secretions of sap feeding insects. The bees collect the nectar into their honey stomach and take it back to the colony. In the process of collecting and taking it to the colony, some enzymes are added and sugars altered. The nectar is stored in cells in the combs and the bees work to evaporate the moisture until it is between 16-18%. At this stage it is honey and because of its very high sugar content (> 80%) it keeps very well.

**Propolis:**

Propolis is a sticky, gummy resinous material gathered by bees from trees and other vegetation. Bees use it to reduce the beehive entrance size and encase foreign material. Propolis contains waxes, resins, balsams, oils and pollen.

It is used in alternate medicine because of its antimicrobial properties (tinctures, ointments, creams, etc).

**Beehive:**

Any container fit to shelter a colony of bees.