

Aggregation and Processing

Aggregation

Aggregation is the collection, gathering and transportation of harvested honey to the refineries for processing. Most beekeepers in Kenya are rural based while processing plants are located in urban areas. Harvested honey is put in plastic containers (jerricans) and loaded onto lorries and trucks for transportation to processing centres.

Honey produced is gathered by individual beekeepers and collected through self-help groups and cooperatives for deliverance to the processing plants. Quality assurance is expected to be adhered to in the factories.

Processing

There are three common methods of extracting honey from the combs which include:

- Using heat to melt the honey.
- Crushing and straining.
- Using a centrifugal extractor

Using heat to melt.

- Heat some water in a sufuria.
- Put honey combs in an enamel basin or any other container which is not made of iron.
- Put the container with honey combs on the boiling water.
- Heat until most of the honey melts.
- Separate the melted honey from the combs by straining through a muslin cloth.
- Keep honey in a container to cool down.
- Remove the wax layer that may form on the surface of the honey.

Crushing and Straining

This method produces the highest quality honey. The following should be done:

Honey combs are crushed and strained using a muslin cloth into the enamel basin.

The scum formed is removed with a wooden spoon. The pure honey is put in a suitable container (plastic or glass jars) that is tightly closed.

Using a Centrifugal Extractor

A centrifugal extractor is used in large scale production. The combs are decapped and placed in the extractor. The rotary motion forces out honey and combs are left clean.