

# Honey From The Bees Of Duhallow



## Duhallow Bee Keepers Association



Honey bees have been around for millions of years, fully evolved and super efficient. It's versatility is phenomenal ranging from making candles from beeswax, as a disinfectant on wounds, soothing sore throats, cooking and as a sweet and comforting food. Honey is produced in nature as a food source for the bees. The honey bee gathers nectar from flowers, carries it back to the hive where the worker bees take over, adding enzymes to the nectar and storing it in the honey comb. The evaporation of water combined with the action of the enzymes turns the nectar to honey.

Honey comes in a variety of forms:

- **Comb Honey:** sold still in the wax comb.
- **Raw Honey:** as it exists in the beehive or as obtained by extraction, settling or straining without adding heat. Raw honey contains some pollen and may contain small particles of wax. Local raw honey is sought after by allergy sufferers as the pollen impurities lessen the sensitivity to hay fever.
- **Filtered honey:** processed by filtration to remove extraneous solids and pollen grains.
- **Strained honey:** which has been passed through a mesh material to remove pieces of wax, tiny particles of bee, without removing pollen.

- Blended honey: a homogeneous mixture of two or more honeys differing in floral source, colour, flavour, density or geographic origin.
- Crystallised honey: in which some of the glucose content has spontaneously crystallised from solution as the monohydrate. Also called "granulated honey".
- Whipped honey is processed to control crystallisation. Whipped honey contains a large number of small crystals in the honey. The small crystals prevent the formation of larger crystals that can occur in unprocessed honey. The processing also produces a honey with a smooth spreadable consistency.

#### Uses of Honey in our everyday life

- It is used in baking cakes, pastries etc.
- Used in candles and preparing fruit creams.
- Mixed in breakfast cereals
- It is mixed with wine and many fermented drinks and beverages.
- It is used to preserve fruits.
- Sweets are prepared with honey.
- Used as a face pack to give an added glow to human skin.
- It has been used in the treatment of burns and cuts as it has mild antiseptic properties.
- A teaspoon of honey if mixed with few drops of lemon and extract of ginger helps in curing colds and coughs.
- For Asthma and Allergies the honey produced by the local honeybee has great properties due to the pollination in the air and in the plants.
- Try using honey if mixed in a glass of lukewarm water and lemon juice cures constipation (to be taken on empty stomach)
- Honey helps in keeping the teeth and gums clean. It also gives shine to the teeth if applied daily.
- One or two teaspoons of honey, if mixed with a cup of warm milk, taken before going to bed, ensures a sound sleep.

Considering the medical and nutritional qualities of honey it can be said that honeybees are the most beautiful gifts of Nature to mankind.

An excellent source of honey is being produced locally by Duhallow Beekeepers Association. The Association was formed 6 years ago. The I. R. D. Newmarket, Co Cork organised a course on beekeeping as an supplementary income to agricultural. From this course the association was formed. Prior to the association being formed there were only three people supplying honey in Duhallow. At that time the demand for honey, was slow due to lack of information and knowledge as to the properties and versatility of the product. Today the Duhallow Beekeepers Association have a member rate of 28 and the demand for honey has greatly increased. The demand outweighs the supply as people are now more aware of its value to health and well being.

This enterprise has served the people of the area very well both as an added income and as a quality health food provider. People from the Duhallow area, who suffer from asthma, hay fever, allergies etc use most of the honey produced. The 28 members, ranging in location from Lyre to Shrone in Co Kerry, supply the whole region of Duhallow and they continue to encourage new members to join.

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