

1/21/58
JWhite: GKS

SURVEY OF BULK HONEY PACKAGING

Limited mail survey was made of 23 packers and producer-packers.

Questions: What % of incoming and outgoing honey is packed in 60's, drums, other containers (specify). Would full-opening lug-heel 60,70# drums be preferred? Also please comment on questions.

15 replies received. Include main plant and 3 branches each from Sioux Honey Association and same from Superior; 3 packers, 3 producer-packers, and one exporter.

One multi-plant group receives most of its honey in drums, another in 60's. The smaller producer-packers and packers receive largely in 60's, and two of the larger ship more bulk honey in drums than in 60's. Remainder ship bulk principally in 60's.

Individual comments are enlightening. In summary, use of drums is definitely more economical, but there are many who prefer smaller units, because of customer demand, ease of handling, and lack of facilities to handle drums. However, very little respect was shown for the 60-pound can -- it is definitely an inferior container.

Individual comment:

1. "Yes, we would prefer" full-opening 60 or 70 lb. steel drum. Rocks Apicaries, Eureka, Ill.
2. "Historically, California Honey always has been shipped in 60's and is so identified. In many countries, buyers identify a better type of Honey as packed in 60's and cheaper types of Honey packed in drums. Consequently for export we prefer to handle Honey in 60's, also that many of our customers are not equipped to handle drums.

"A Canadian 70-pound lug seal drum with full opening cover is very interesting as shipping in such a container would do away with cartoning the 60's, which is very bothersome. If Western Honey could be shipped domestic-wise and export-wise in such container, we see no reason why it could not be adapted, in fact it may prove to be an improvement.

"One thing, however, has to be observed. Presently the 60's are made with a very ^{thin} ~~line~~ layer of tin, which causes the iron in the metal to create HMF in the Honey after long storage. Believe we should wake up to the fact that this is a very dangerous development since several European countries will soon prohibit the import of Honey in which HMF is found. If an export container could be created which does not create the HMF in Honey, it would be a great help and ultimately for our own consumers too."

H. H. Schumacker, B-Z-B Honey Co., Alhambra, California.

3. "It is understood some experiments are under way to pack honey in a plastic container inserted into a heavy cardboard of the 60-lb. capacity. We believe this type packaging of bulk honey has merit. The cost should not only be less than a 60-lb. tin container, but the space required in handling and storage prior to filling, would certainly be far less. A container development of this type would permit a re-use of the outer carton and the inner container should be a throw-away which would eliminate possibility of disease spread and also the curse of some of the exceptionally poor quality of used 5-gallon cans facing us in today's trade."

G. V. Walker, Los Angeles Honey Co., Los Angeles 63, California

4. "We are equipped here at the plant to handle either 60# cans or drums. Actually we prefer honey to come in in drums as it is less labor involved. It might be that the Canadian 70# container would be an advantage over our 5 gallon can. It certainly would be cheaper to a producer rather than have to buy new 5 gallon cans every year. We believe, however, that the 650# drum is the cheapest method of handling bulk honey by a producer for the packer. The drums last indefinitely and if the producer can get them returned to him at a nominal cost he is far ahead of the man buying 5 gallon cans every year."

Ken Bradshaw, R. D. Bradshaw & Sons, Wendell, Idaho.

5. "Prefer 60's. Would like a square steel drum, with 3 inch screw top opening."

F. A. Babcock, Cloverdale Honey Co., Fredonia, N. Y.

6. "The 60 lb. can is very unsatisfactory due to the poor quality of the cans and the short life. Also, the amount of honey per unit is too small resulting in the handling of too many units. As we view the matter just now we would prefer to handle the 650 lb. drums but first our plant must be remodeled so that we can properly handle the incoming honey."

T. E. Burleson, T. W. Burleson & Son, Waxahachie, Texas

7. "Just started handling drums so unable to compare yet."

Superior Honey Company, Ogden, Utah.

8. "Since handling both drums and sixties to some extent we must prefer the sixties as they are faster to handle for us and gives us a much better selectivity in making up blends and trying to maintain a constant color in our fancy packs. To date, our bulk handling has been quite limited; however, we are set up for it and feel that in the future the operation will become much more efficient. There seems to be merit on the beekeepers' side for the 70-pound lug seal drums; however, in our present operation we would have to do quite a bit of converting and go to some expense to be able to handle them, and then it would not be convenient to handle both the seventy pound and the present sixty pound at the same time."

T. E. Hurd, Superior Honey Co., South Gate, Calif.

9. "We are not equipped here in Denver to handle honey in drums except at considerable additional labor and we much prefer receiving honey in the 60 lb. cans. The Canadian lug seal drum that you mention is quite new to us and we are not in a position to render an opinion."

Ralph J. Stone, Superior Honey Co., Denver, Colo.

10. "We see no advantage in any other size container. We prefer honey that we process for retail in drums. The only honey we keep in cans is that which we sell direct to buyers such as export sales and other bulk buyers."

Nova Beck, Sioux Honey Assoc., Anaheim, Calif.

11. "We prefer to handle honey in drums over sixties, not having had any experience handling the Canadian 70 lb. lug seal drum I am unable to relate any of its merits.

"From experience my only comment I would like to pass on - is that the 650 lb. barrels handle faster and are much easier and quicker to clean. Although they do take up more space in storage over the sixties when stored either empty or full.

"The only type container that would correct the problem of storage when empty would be to have one built with a slighter smaller bottom than the top so they could be telescoped together for storage when empty. This would also assist in removing the honey from the containers."

Alton Young, Sioux Honey Asso., Lima, Ohio

12. "We have geared our equipment to handle the 55-gallon drum and find that it is very convenient to handle our honey in this manner. It is more economic from the producer standpoint and also saves quite a lot of labor in the plant. I would not care to make any changes to a different type drum or go back to the sixty pound can alone."

V. H. Sindt, Sioux Honey Assoc., Rogers, Texas.

13. "For the 1957 crop year there has been an increase in the use of drums so that 75-80% of our bulk honey will be in drums.

"Some of our members started using drums about 4 years ago, since then those that have used them are very well satisfied and would not care to go back to 60 lb. cans. Some members claim there is a savings of over 1¢ per pound in using a 55 gal. drum instead of a 60 lb. can.

"Fifty percent of our members use drums and of this number nearly all of them are large commercial operators. Some that do not, are either small operators or it would be hard for them to change over to drums in their present set-up.

"Regarding the 70 lb. lug type container used by the Canadians. We had considered this type a few years back and used a 60 lb. bucket with a lug type closer for a few years but then went back to the 60 lb. can.

"We note that there is an increase in the use of 55 gal. drums for consumer trade and we expect it to increase in the future."

DeWayne Barrett, Sioux Honey Asso., Sioux City, Iowa.