

2021 Farm Show Rule Updates

Each year, the Farm Show exhibiting rules are updated and changes made to create a fair competition and clarify areas that come into question. Farm Show Apiary Department chairpersons Charlie Vorisek and Thomas Butzler compare notes, thoughts and meet with the Farm Show administrators in late March. At this meeting we collaborate on problems, solutions and how to make the show interesting for the general public. These changes are often in answer to exhibitor or spectator concerns.

First change for 2021, is ALL entries must be done online prior to entry-day. **Exhibits may no longer be entered onsite**, on Thursday before the show. Deadline for 2021 entries is 6:00PM, Wednesday, Jan 7, 2021.

An entry fee of \$1 per OPEN SHOW entry will be charged for each entry registered by Dec 15, 2020. From Dec 15, 2020 to Jan 7, 2021 the entry charge will be \$2 per entry.

Rule #1 states "All apiary products exhibited must have been produced by the exhibitor in Pennsylvania since the 2020 Farm Show". The spirit of the rule includes Collective Exhibits. How much change defines a new exhibit? Can, or do, people re-enter honey, wax or other exhibits? The following change will apply to 2021:

"Exhibits may be dated or stamped by judges". Therefore, we plan to ink-stamp all entries, where practical. The stamp is as illustrated in Fig 1. It is intended to be placed discreetly and not to deface the product.



With regard to **County and Individual Collective Exhibits, the 2021 rules are specifying a theme**. This has been a topic for many years.

The state fair themes are difficult to adopt and apply to apiary exhibits. Specifying a theme will change the randomness of the collective exhibits at the Farm Show. This will give every collective exhibit a common starting point. It will also deter groups or individuals from entering the same display year after year. Judges can compare 'apples to apples'. How well the theme is presented to the public will separate competitors. Our audience is the public, not necessarily other beekeepers. In an effort NOT to promote a specific national author or book, we are using the Penn State publication, "Beekeeping Basics" to establish themes. This keeps everything under a Pa/PDA umbrella...and further highlight Extension's work in this commodity. The Premium rules will have a live online link to this publication. Beekeeping Basics is getting an update this year. The PSU publication is available online or through a county extension office. There are enough chapters to go several years without repeating.

For 2021, Class 34, **Individual Collective Exhibit theme will be: "The Colony and Its Organization"** from Beekeeping Basics.

Class 35, the **County or Association Collective Exhibit theme will be: "Starting with Bees"** from Beekeeping Basics. The use of bee equipment is allowed.

At times the judges are forced to disqualify exhibits because they failed to meet all the rules of entry. To do otherwise is unfair to the exhibitor that closely followed the rules. All exhibits must be entered in the correct class at the time of entry. The entry team will still be able to correct color classes of extracted honey on Thursday. Otherwise, it is up to the exhibitor to enter all other exhibits correctly. On 'judging day' (Friday), we are not at liberty to change or fix classes. Sometimes this can be as simple as "six cookies"...not less or more. Or frosted cakes when the rules state, "no frosting". We are working with the Farm Show to make the entry tags received in the mail, clearly identify the exhibit. One such case was cut comb honey entered into Wooden Frame Section class. The exhibitor may have caught the error if it was clear on the entry tag. Unfortunately, it had to be disqualified.

Mead rules will only allow **"one standard 1x2.6" mailing label** adhered to the bottle". "The type of honey (and fruit) must be noted" on the label. No additional labels or larger labels are permitted.

Rule #8. "Comb honey, extracted honey, crystallized and creamed extracted honey, and chunk honey are all judged on their appearance for market. Therefore, legal labels must be attached including the words: honey, name, address, and net weight."

This rule has not changed. Use of labels is a point of debate. Labels give the Farm Show exhibits connection to the public, as they like to see who the winners are and where they are from. The Farm Show administrators want to see labels. Previously, the labels have been factored in judging, but not clear points on the scorecard. **Labels will carry 5 points on the scorecard in 2021.**

A suggestion has come forward for a "Black Jar" honey contest. This could be added as a new class for 2022. This class would be judged only on taste. Taste is considered with standard judging, but not the only factor. A set of rules and method of judging would need to be established. This would need to be completed on judging day. Would it be only judged by honey judges or could it be sampled by any number of invited people on-site that day? Even in taste, people have bias. This cannot be added officially for 2021, but could be proposed for 2022. Food safety must be a consideration. Any questions or suggestions contact Charlie at vbeefarm@windstream.net