

Honey Manufacturing Food Business

Honey is defined under the Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code as, "the natural sweet substance produced by honeybees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of living parts of plants or excretions of plant sucking insects on the living parts of plants, which honey bees collect, transform and combine with specific substances of their own, store and leave in the honey comb to ripen and mature".



Raw Honey: **(Food Business Licence not required)**

Honey is considered unprocessed primary produce where the harvesting of the honey includes:

- Uncapping
- Extraction
- Settling
- Straining

Packaging unprocessed primary produce is exempt from requiring a Food Business Licence, where the handling of honey fits into the above definitions of what is considered 'raw honey'.

Commercial Honey: **(Food Business Licence required)**

Where honey undergoes further processes such as below;

- Heating, to destroy yeast, dissolve crystals and decrease viscosity prior to filtration;
- Filtration, to produce a clearer product;
- Pasteurization;
- Ultrasonication, to reduce yeast cells;
- Creaming, to produce fine crystals;
- Whipping;
- Dehydrating, to reduce moisture content.

The licencing exemption relating to unprocessed primary produce does not apply, as these further steps are considered 'processing' and a Food Business licence will be required.

Labelling

All honey that is packaged for retail sale is required to comply with labelling requirements, in accordance with the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*. Please see the following link for further information on labelling requirements. <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/food-pantry/food-labelling>

Food labelling is Queensland Health jurisdiction. If you require any further information on labelling, please contact the Sunshine Coast Public Health Unit on 1300 017 190.

Please see the below table for further information on when a Food Business Licence or labelling is required.

Processed + Packed for retail sale
Licence + full labelling
Not Processed + Packed for retail sale
No Licence + full labelling
Not Processed + Packed in presence of purchaser
No Licence + no labelling
Processed + Packed in presence of purchaser
Licence only
Not Processed + Packed for wholesale
No licence + identification labelling only
Processed onsite for immediate consumption
No Licence + no labelling

Before you start

Before you start a new business, you will need to consider council's planning requirements, and obtain relevant building and plumbing approvals.

Please contact the planning, building and plumbing sections of council before submitting your application for a food business licence.

Kitchen fit-out minimum requirements

Domestic kitchen fit-out is subject to the minimum requirements set out in the Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 - Food Premises and Equipment of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. Fit-out and design requirements for domestic kitchens include the following:

- a designated hand wash basin within the honey processing area and to be used only for that purpose;
- a double-bowl sink; or
- a single-bowl sink and a dishwasher capable of running a final rinse cycle hot enough and long enough to be an effective sanitizer (66°C or higher);
- separate food preparation equipment (only to be used for food business);
- designated storage area for food business (separate from domestic use);
- potable water (if using rainwater, it must be treated to meet the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011);
- effective sewerage disposal (if using septic system, check that it can handle the added load of wastewater);
- sufficient light and ventilation for the food handling activities;
- pets are not to have access to or be in the food preparation or storage area at any time.



Food Recall Plan

A written recall plan is required for all businesses manufacturing food to be sold elsewhere, for example, bottled honey sold at the markets or distributed to retailers.

Food recall is initiated when the business or government agency is notified that the food is not safe. There are many reasons for food to be recalled. It could be due to physical contamination (a piece of metal), chemical contamination (detergent in food), microbiological contamination (bacterial growth) or undeclared allergen.

The written recall plan must include the following:

- internal procedures and responsibilities for conducting a recall;
- contact details of market organisers e.g. Facebook;
- contact details for your local Queensland Health
- Public Health Unit and Food Regulation Unit;
- list of markets that products are sold at;
- procedures for food retrieval and assessing any returned product.

Additional Information

FSANZ Food Recall templates

(<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/foodrecalls/recalltemplates/Pages/default.aspx>)

Queensland Health – labelling Information

(<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/food-pantry/food-labelling>)

Gympie Regional Council – Health and rainwater tanks

(<https://www.gympie.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/3226/hei202-health-and-rainwater-tanks>)

Australian Honey Bee Industry Council – industry regulated quality assurance program B-Qual

(<https://honeybee.org.au/>)



Contact us

In person (by appointment only):

Environmental Health Services

29 Channon Street, Gympie QLD 4570

By mail:

PO Box 155, Gympie QLD 4570

By email:

health@gympie.qld.gov.au

By phone:

1300 307 800

