



Quick Reference Guide

Tips to Guard Against Buying Transshipped or Adulterated Honey

Documents

- Ask the importer for a copy of customs form 3461 on which you will see:
 - Country of origin declared to U.S. customs
 - H.S. code - natural honey should be 0409.00.00
- Ask for a certificate of origin ("COO"). In most countries approved and classified as high-risk by True Source, COOs are issued or approved by government agencies. For example, these agencies are the Export Inspection Agency for India, Chamber of Commerce for Vietnam and Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Ukraine.
- Ask the importer for traceability documents showing chain of custody from the foreign beekeeper to your door. These documents include beekeeper names and volume supplied, packing list from the exporter including lot identification, sea bill of lading, warehouse inbound and domestic trucking documents

Laboratories and Testing

The following labs are known worldwide for their expertise in honey analysis. They perform a number of tests to check for adulteration or verify country-of-origin. Please contact the labs to receive a full list of offerings.

- *Quality Services International GmbH*
Flughafendamm 9a
28199 Bremen
Germany

Phone: +49 - (0)421 - 596607 - 0

Fax: +49 - (0)421 - 596607 19

info@qsi-q3.de
<http://www.qsi-q3.de/>

- *Intertek Food Services GmbH*
Olof - Palme Str. 8
Bremen, 28719
Germany
678-230-7388 (Beat Herrmann)
beat.herrmann@intertek.com
<https://www.intertek.com/food/testing/>

Taste and Appearance

Chinese transshipped honey usually has a typical taste and that taste also will potentially signify adulteration. Any honey received that has no taste, no particular smell and/or unexpectedly light in color should be questioned. These are all characteristics of Chinese or honey adulterated with tasteless, light colored sugars or syrups. Suppliers should supply documentary evidence described above and samples should be sent to labs for COO and adulteration testing.

Know your supply chain.

Whether you are buying from an importer or directly from a foreign exporter, know your supply chain. In a tight honey supply situation, offers at prices that are too good to be true or for large volume should raise red flags. Have you visited the foreign exporter's plant? Are there any food safety audits? How long has the exporter been in business? Ask for references. Is the foreign supplier a member of a known association in its country?

Also, there are no legitimate exporters located in free trade zones. Such a location would indicate that exporters are importing and then exporting honey without making customs entrance in their country of origin.

If you are buying from an importer:

How long has the importer been in business? Ask for references. Ask the importer if they have checked all of the above.

Production in the Declared Country-Of-Origin

Be suspicious when honey is said to be produced in countries with little history of supplying honey to the USA. If the price is below market price, there usually is a reason! Based on industry experience, the below listed countries have little exportable honey.

- Indonesia
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Turkey
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- Philippines
- South Korea

Other Tips: If you have other tips on how to become a wiser buyer who performs due diligence in honey buying decisions, please communicate them to the National Honey Packers and Dealers Association at <http://afi.mytradeassociation.org/> or send an email to info@truesourcehoney.com.