

AVAILABILITY OF HONEY

As you may have seen in the media there is a likelihood of a shortage of honey by Christmas 2008. There is no doubt that many beekeepers, particularly the commercial beekeepers, have not had a good harvest in both 2007 and 2008. This was partly due to winter losses of bees and poor weather in either Spring or Summer.

There was evidence in some of my hives, and I gather in hives belonging to other beekeepers, of bees having to consume the honey during the inclement weather. That is why we usually advise that sufficient should be left on to deal with poor weather. Whilst feeding is alright in Autumn there is a risk that feeding Spring or Summer will mean that if the weather improves the sugar syrup feed will be moved up into the supers by the bees and become part of the honey take - not a good idea !!

The honeys I exhibited at my talk on the 17th November 2008 were :-

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| Soft Set | Lot No. L0809001- A mixture of Spring and Summer honey from Gayton & Holmwood (Barnston) |
| Medium Clear | Lot No. L0801101- A mixture of Spring and Summer honey from Gayton |
| Dark Clear | Lot No. L0801001- A mixture of Spring and Summer honey from Gayton |
| Jelly Set | Lot No. L0800701- A late Summer honey from Gayton. Believed to be a mixture of local Heather, Sea Aster and other nectars. |

At the moment having had 2 to 3 reasonable years I have adequate honey to cope with all but an exceptional demand. Honey will keep for many years provided it has been treated correctly, has a water content below 18% to 20% and is in airtight containers. In fact it is said that honey found in Tutankhamun's tomb was edible.

Whilst I have little problem with supplying "Soft Set" and "Medium Clear" I only have a few jars left of the Dark honey although I may find more when I have finished extracting this year's crop. Similarly the "Jelly Set" was been sold out but I have a similar honey ready for bottling and may have a similar taste.

Currently I have some "Soft Set", "Dark Clear" and "Medium Clear" of the above Lot Numbers ready for sale at £4.50 per 454g (1 lb) jar.

Michael Minter 19 November 2008