

TORBAY BEEKEEPERS' HONEY EXTRACTOR

This is a small easily transported extractor. Very suitable for members to borrow and with only a single super or two to extract. It does have limitations which will be pointed out here but this should not be a problem for a limited amount of extracting. These notes are important guidelines to help avoid too much mess and safe working for the operator and the machine.



The extractor stands firmly and conveniently on the floor of the kitchen. It is manually operated. Below the extractor drum and attached by easy clips is a sump which acts as a collecting and settling tank. It holds around 50lb of honey. About two good supers worth. Honey runs during the extracting through holes in the floor between the two drums. It passes through a built-in, removable filter and into the lower drum.

There are two half lids that should be in place after inserting combs. This saves a lot of fine splashes of honey escaping during extraction.

The handle has a spring-loaded clutch mechanism. This is a safe and convenient system to allow the extractor to spin freely after turning the handle.

Slow and steady turning is better than fast and furious.

The frames are arranged tangentially to rotation not radially. It will take 4 super frames or 2 deep frames, National, Commercial or 14x12.

In a tangential extractor honey only spins out of the outer side of the comb so at some point the frames have to be reversed. **In fact they have to be reversed twice.** This is because the heavy load of honey on the inside face of the comb pushes outwards during rotation and can rupture the comb. So the guidelines are;

First rotation slow and gentle. Not all honey that side is extracted. Reverse combs.

Second rotation, stronger and faster to empty outward facing cells. Reverse combs.

Third rotation, strong rotation to completely empty the outward facing cells. The frame should now be empty but sticky.

NOTE. The frames should always be placed so that the bottom bars face the direction of rotation. (Think about it!) Filtering

The internal filter is quite fine and will soon become blocked especially if the combs are uncapped by scratching with a fork. There is a fork in the kit. Most people I think, prefer to use a knife to remove the wax cappings from sealed combs. If the internal filter becomes blocked it will be a problem to separate without mess, the internally sticky, extracting drum. However, the filter should be OK for two supers.

To avoid this internal filtering it can be left out. The filtering can be delayed until the honey is drained into tubs. There is a double strainer in the kit which can be paced across the storage tub for the honey to pass through as it leaves the extractor. Note that filtering is most efficient if the honey is as warm as possible.

Raising the extractor

Clearly with the extractor on the floor it is not possible to place tub or pail under the honey gate (tap). The best way to manage this will have to be decided by local conditions. If the extractor drums are separated after letting the top drum drain, perhaps overnight, then the top can be

unclipped, separated and washed out. The extracted honey should be allowed to settle or “ripen” over at least 24 hours. This allows fine air bubbles rise to the surface and result in clearer more transparent honey. Note that the honey could be stored in airtight tubs at this point, then warmed and liquified in the tub even months later to maximum 50 C and finely strained through 200 mesh into a bottling tank. Honey does not store well for long periods in jars.

Cleaning the extractor

Obviously very important and here are some tips to make it as easy as possible.

First and most important, is to only use cold water for washing the extractor.

The reason is that wax particles could soften or even melt and stick to the inside of the extractor. This will make cleaning almost impossible.

Remove the lids and the rotation-gear bar. There are two nuts holding the bar in place which require a 13mm spanner. Also included in the kit.

Lift out the frame cage and hose thoroughly. Lumps of propolis tend to resist the water but if cold are easily flicked off with something like an old credit card. **Please don't use a metal scraper.** Pay particular attention to the gap where the wall of the extractor joins the base. This also applies to the lower drum.

When reassembling the components, **please re-grease the bearing end of the frame cage.** Clear Vaseline is OK but use sparingly.

Explanatory photos



The extractor frame cage.



The spindle bearing end to be greased



This shows the bar carrying the rotation gearing. Note the 13mm nut, of two, holding the bar in position. These have to be removed to dismantle the machinery for cleaning. **Not to be lost!**



This is the handle showing the spring loaded Clutch mechanism which allows the extractor to free-wheel. Note the two ridges in line which have to be in position for the clutch to engage.

Here the clear, plastic half-lids are in position. Note the tabs which have to be depressed slightly to push under the bar and lock firmly in position.



There are illustrations of uncapping and extracting with larger equipment shown on the TBK website.