

We bottle the honey fresh on our farm, and then allow the honey to naturally micro-crystallize over several weeks, just as it would in a Canadian prairie beehive. After it sets up, the honey is transferred to frozen storage where it will maintain its freshness indefinitely. When Wendell Estate Honey leaves our storage facility it is as fresh as the day it was harvested.

Raw honey does not have a “best before” date. How long the honey stays fresh is entirely dependent on storage conditions. Raw honey will remain delicious at room temperature (20-30°C) for several weeks. However, the honey will very slowly darken over time (weeks to months) at room temperature. Raw honey often contains natural yeasts that can cause honey to ferment as the honey absorbs moisture from the air. The rate that this happens depends on temperature and humidity and varies from as rapidly as several weeks at temperatures of 25°C and above to many months in the refrigerator (~2°C - 10°C) to indefinitely in a freezer (<0°C).

Fermented honey can be identified by a darker colour, foamy bubbles on the surface, a “yeasty” odor and a sour taste. Note that eating fermented honey poses absolutely no health risk, but many people find the sour taste unpleasant.

If you find that your honey is too hard, you can stir (knead or “disturb”) it with a strong spoon for a moment and it will become much softer. Or you can warm it gently by placing the jar in a warm (25°C - 35°C) water bath for about 30-60 minutes.

Warming our raw honey above 35-40°C will cause it to melt into a translucent liquid (melting is a bit of a slow process so the exact temperature depends on time and also can vary slightly from jar to jar with differences in floral composition and moisture content). If the liquid honey cools to room temperature, it can gradually re-crystallize into a harder, courser, granular form. This honey can be re-warmed to a liquid if desired.

Finally, as honey is heated above 40°C, the natural enzymes that give honey many of its health benefits will begin to breakdown. How much the health benefits are decreased depends on the maximum temperature the honey has reached. This is one reason raw, unheated honey is healthier (and tastes better) than pasteurized honey. Keep in mind that even though the health benefits of raw honey are at their maximum if the honey has never exceeded 40°C, any real, natural honey is always a much healthier choice than processed sugars.