



Instructions for use of DSBA's 9 Frame Radial Honey Extractor

Please note that this guide does not cover any of the hygiene regulations that must be followed.

On collection of the extractor from the apiary please check for damage and cleanliness and note any problems before accepting loan. The extractor will be checked in against the collection report. We appreciate that breakages can occur, however, please report these to allow repairs to be carried out. The unit must be returned in a clean condition.

Before use, the extractor should be washed out and then dried thoroughly. Any water remaining will adversely affect the moisture content of your honey.

If at all possible, the frames should be removed (with the prior use of a clearing board) and honey extracted in one process. If this is not possible then a warming cabinet is required to reheat the frames to the recommended temperature (see table at rear of DSBA The Basics of Beekeeping) and Oil Seed Rape honey brings additional problems (again see DSBA The Basics of Beekeeping). Attempting to process frames that have cooled down will not release all of the harvest and can damage the comb.

Equipment required

In addition to the extractor you will require to have the following (not supplied).

- Uncapping knife or fork (to remove the wax cappings) and muslin bag for cappings
- Uncapping tray or a honey bucket with "Bucket Bar" (Workstation to uncap the frames)
- Double stainless steel or nylon honey strainers (to remove wax and bee parts)
- 30lb (13.6kg) (or larger) plastic honey buckets and lids (at least one bucket with a honey valve)
- Refractometer (to check moisture content of the honey)
- Sheet plastic (to cover the floor)
- Basin of cold water and clean towels
- Low table to place the extractor on to empty contents into honey buckets
- Method of numbering and logging the honey buckets to the colony that produced the contents

Preparing the frames

If you do not have a honey house to process the honey then the kitchen can be a good second choice. Place a plastic sheet over the floor to catch any drips of honey and create a triangle between honey supers, work surface for the uncapping process and the extractor. Quickly grade your frames in order of approximate weight and take a heavy one to the uncapping station. Using your chosen method of uncapping, locate the frame lug in the hole in the bucket bar and cut or scrape the cappings into a clean empty honey bucket. If using an uncapping tray then follow the manufacturer's instructions. When all the cappings are removed, take the frame to the extractor.

Loading the extractor

The extractor must be placed on a solid level surface and then remove the two half lids. Ensure that the Honey Valve is closed (yes it does happen!) Place the frame you have uncapped in the extractor locating the frame on its side with the end lugs in the lower D shaped ring and the top lug within the two pins (if the frame does not want to fit between the two pins then that is okay as the lower D ring will hold it. Return to the super and take another frame of similar weight and uncap in the same way. When ready, take the frame to the extractor and place opposite the first frame in the same way. Continue this and again with similar weighted frames place the next two frames at the left and right of the first two. You may need to rotate the basket in order to access the lower locating D rings and upper pins. You now have frames at (in clock face terms) approximately 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock. Fill in the remaining five spaces in the basket again trying to balance out the frames opposite each other. Wash your hands in cold water and refit the lids ensuring they are a good fit and will not drop into the



spinning basket. The care in loading the extractor helps to keep vibration to a minimum when the cage starts to spin.

Extraction

You must tuck all loose clothing in and tie long hair back (and remember hygiene) in order that it cannot get caught in the equipment. With a hand on the top of the extractor (out of the way from the mechanism!), gently turn the handle in one direction to settle the frames and then slowly increase the speed. Depending on the viscosity of the honey slow down and stop after say twenty turns of the handle. Repeat this but turn the handle in the opposite direction to try and get more honey to spin out. Again slow down and when the handle has stopped, remove a lid and check a frame to see if the honey has all been extracted. If not, frame in, lid on and repeat the above operation. Do not spin the basket too hard as it is possible to damage the comb due to excessive centrifugal force. After checking all frames have the honey crop removed, remove them from the extractor and place back in the honey super. Continue the above until all your bounty has been extracted. Whilst extracting, keep an eye on the level of honey now in the bottom of the extractor as if the cage hits the honey then air is added and the handle will tell you that you have hit the honey! The cappings can be filled into a clean muslin bag and tied to the cage frame (remember and try to keep the load balanced) and the honey can be spun out.

Straining and Filling Buckets

When the extractor is needing emptied (either you are finished or the level is high) it must be placed on a proprietary bench or table tall enough to allow a honey bucket (and a bit extra) to be placed under the honey valve. This is when you may be glad you selected 30lb buckets! If the honey bucket has a honey valve then check to ensure it is closed. The twin strainer should be placed on top of the honey bucket and the honey valve can be gently opened. The gold nectar will flow from the extractor into the bucket via the strainers. Number the honey bucket and keep your records in order that you can trace back to see what colony is producing what quantities and also traceability should there be a problem with quality. Buckets should have air tight lids fitted and stored as recommended (see DSBA The Basics of Beekeeping).

Wet frames

You will now have honey supers loaded with sticky “wet” frames. Place them somewhere bee proof until later in the day (evening when foraging bees are home is best to prevent robbing) and then give them back to the bees (try and give the frames back to the colony they were removed from) and overnight you will have clean drawn comb. These frames are now stored in a mouse and bee proof store for use as required. Wet cappings can be used for Mead production or fed back to the colony in a round 4 pint rapid feeder with the centre cone removed to allow the bees up to the cappings. When the cappings resemble oatmeal, remove from the colony. Store this high quality wax for your winter projects.

Cleaning Up

Tidy all the equipment up and wash using cold water. Place the extractor outside and fill with cold water. Refit the lids and turn the handle a few times to agitate all the moving parts. Empty (via the honey valve) and carry this out a few times until you are happy that it is clean.

Returning after use

Arrange to take it back to the apiary. Please bear in mind that it will be going out to another member and it should be in a clean condition. When it is returned it will be inspected and if not clean you will be asked to clean it and as there is no running water at the apiary you will incur a double journey and the next member may not be able to get it if it is a back-to-back loan.

Prior to arranging loan, please check when booking that your frame size will fit the extractor cage.