Self Learning Program

B-QUAL

Unit 1 – Exercise 4, Sampling

A product of B-QUAL AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

IMPLEMENT SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Objective:

When you have completed this section, you should be able to implement the required sample retention work instructions and understand the importance of samples and their use in product recall within the B-QUAL Standards as they apply to your enterprise.

Purpose:

The purpose of the section is to provide information on the sample collection requirements of B-QUAL and provide practical illustrations of the sampling regime required under the program.

Overview:

The sample plan for B-QUAL is prescribed as a sample from every extraction.

This statement should be taken in context. That is, if a single sample for the day's extraction does not provide proper and accurate information from the various apiary locations, it follows that more than one extraction on the day is required to ensure appropriate traceability of the product to its floral source, apiary location, etc.

The FSANZ Standards calls for the food producer to be able to participate in a product recall. Recalled food must be identified and isolated so that it may not be sold. To achieve this, a recall protocol must be in place and hence the requirement under B-QUAL for retention samples.

Each sample must be at least 150 mls.

Each sample must be retained for at least 12 months.

Samples must be stored in clean containers.

If honey is sold direct to the public, *C. botulinum* testing is required to verify apiary practices are effective in preventing contamination.

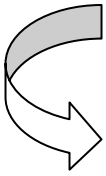
Each sample must be labelled to ensure recall is effective. This means that the labels should carry sufficient information for the sample to be readily identified. As such would include details such as:

- Date of extraction;
- Apiary identification;
- Floral source (code);
- Batch number (if relevant);
- Drum or IBC identification that the sample relates to.

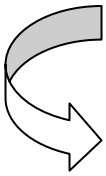
Consider the use of samples in biosecurity control. If required does your sample regime address the biosecurity risk of your operation? This is normally why beekeepers separate their extractions so that each apiary is extracted separately and has a wash down between extractions so that the sample is 'clean'. That is one extraction does not contaminate the other.

Traceability is essential. Consider your product and its disposition. Can it be traced? To assist see the diagram below for what is meant by traceability. You may have another system that will work just as well. You are not required to do more than document how you achieve the outcome in your own system. In fact, B-QUAL appreciates that most systems will vary.

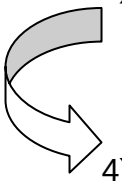
Apiary Identification and Traceability (example flow)



1) Beekeepers day to day activities are recorded in B-QUAL records that may include diary records. This includes where the bees are and what floral source that they are on at the time and what if any additional husbandry that they may have had. This is recorded by date and by apiary.



2) Extraction records are maintained along with the various cleaning and production records that you keep so that you are able to demonstrate to a 3rd party that the honey was extracted in a clean environment according to the standards. Extraction records will include the drum/vat/IBC identification.



3) A sample of every extraction is maintained in at least a 150ml container with a label that identifies the extraction uniquely; this is stored for 12 months. Some enterprises will maintain a log of all samples for easy recall.

4) **If you are selling direct to the public**; you need to assess if you are maintaining adequate identification and traceability at transaction so that you may call on the sample should there be a complaint. In small

operations, the sale date and the floral source is enough because there will usually be only one drum or container that is being used at that time. In these cases, a log of what product is being used is good enough so that recall is effective. In larger more diverse operations, consider the complexities of blending etc that would call for an additional sample to be taken to reflect the additional processing steps.

5) When product is sold; the sale is documented on commercial documentation with a vendor declaration. The vendor declaration includes the product details (floral source, bee husbandry etc); drum/IBC identification (relates directly to extraction records and retention sample) and also the destination of the product.

6) The packer would take samples of each drum/IBC that is delivered for both commercial and food safety reasons. Further sampling would be undertaken to reflect the level of processing. In any case, the sale to the public must relate to a sample that is maintained at the site that production was undertaken.

Instruction

⏩ GO TO –

the B-QUAL Approved Supplier Manual, section 2.3, complete Work Instruction 09.

SELF CHECK

Have you:

- **Read and implemented Work Instruction 09.**
- **Read and understood the product recall requirements of the FSANZ Standards at Section 2.5 (see Food Safety Standards after Biosecurity in the References, go to Clause 12 Food Recall).**

If you have ticked all points; you have completed this section.

⏩ GO TO – UNIT 1 – Exercise 5