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TROPICAL HONEY

By: Lieko Boersma

de TRAAAY



Tropical honey from the barrel. How about that ?!

TROPICAL HONEY

W. Vuijk / L. Boersma, De Traay BV

Introduction. Company De Traay BV

Traayweg (Traay road) was the name of the street where Wouters first beehives were located.

For the last 50 years Wouter Vuijk, founder and owner of apiculture De Traay, is a friend of the bee population. During his student days he owned a small organic shop and not long after that, he bought his first beehives. In 1977 the first jars of honey were sold and De Traay was born. In 2017, De Traay celebrated its 40-year anniversary, a valuable moment. Wouter studied to become a silversmith but instead of working with silver, he unravelled the secrets of beekeeping. As of early age he was close to nature which led to the decision to work as an organic beekeeper, with respect for animals, environment and people. According to Wouter, respect is one of the secret ingredients for his delicious honey.

A lot has changed over the last 40 years. Lately De Traay has seen a growing demand for natural unrefined sweeteners. De Traay offers organic products such as Agave syrup, Rice syrup, Date syrup and Fig-syrup to meet this group of consumers. One by one delicious natural sweeteners, but even after 40 years honey remains the favourite.

De Traay imports around 9000 Metric tonnes honey and other natural sweeteners. = 1.7 containers per day! = Approximately 595 barrels per week in production!

We sell our top quality products mainly in the Benelux and Germany. Recently we **started** the buying and filling of honey for the German Bio Brand "Allos". Allos is owned by Wessanen (Benelux). Bonneterre is another brand of Wessanen on the French market. Recently Bonneterre honey was nr. 1 in the organic test in France, based on the price-quality ratio.

De Traay's own brands are: De Traay (specialty shops) / Melvita (supermarket) / Adelshoeve (local) / Wouters Regional honey (Dutch honeys)

De Traay is a concept. Guarantee for good quality honey. Wouter Vuijk was one of the founders of the EKO quality mark of SKAL for honey in the Netherlands. How do we meet our quality:

- Organic (SKAL), FAIRTRADE, NOP, BIOLAND, DEMETER certified
- BRC. British Retail Consortium level A certification. Quality and Food safety system. Is a requirement from the trade to be able and allowed to deliver.
- Own lab. 5 employees. Quality guarantee / Quality control. Entrance / Production / Exit control. Avg. Euro 2500, - analysis costs per lot of honey.
- Analysis based on results only from accredited EU labs. Such as Intertek, QSI and/or Eurofins. Mostly based in Germany.
- Active member of F.E.E.D.M. Honey packers association of Europe. Twice a year a meeting on the Agenda. Here, the European regulations and International trade topics are discussed.

International honey trade. Definition according to EU regulation

"Honey is a natural, sweet substance produced by the bee species *Apis mellifera* from flower nectar or secretions of living plant parts or excretions of plant sap sucking insects on the

plants. This substance is collected by the bees, processed by mixing with its own specific substances, deposited, dehydrated and stored in the honeycombs and left to ripen ". The European Union sets specific rules for honey in addition to food legislation. Council Directive 2001/110 / EC of 20 December 2001 on honey.

BIO regulations are drawn up and checked by SKAL in the Netherlands. Bio inspection organization.

What is the difference with conventional honey? For example:

- Pesticides may not be used. But for example, formic acid are allowed to be used
- Bees must survive winter on their own honey.
- The bees collect their nectar in unspoiled nature, where no pesticides or herbicides are used, at least 3 kilometres away from industrial activity or traffic.
- Biological certificate to import as such. And to be checked by the authorities.

For further information please check www.skal.nl

GMO / MGO pollen that today can be detected in honey analyses can cause problems. Of course we want to offer GMO free honey. Fortunately, pollen is not considered an ingredient of honey. Should that be the case, then De Traay should also state the pollen on the label. Therefore we always check for GMO pollen from GMO crops.

As already indicated, by law, tropical honey may have an HMF up to 80 for consumer purposes. But in practise we require much lower HMF values for importing and packaging. Because De Traay honey is blended and should stay below the required HMF at the end of the shelf life of the product we state in our specification an HMF of up to 15, exceptionally up to 20. For Germany the average specification requirement is a maximum of 10 for bulk honey imports in Germany.

A huge challenge. The honey market is not easy.

It would be best to explain this by using the following example.

Let's say we have, with all our passion, love and commitment, honey in Costa Rica available for export. From economic point of view it is best to export a 20ft container with an average of 70 drums of homogenized honey 20400Kg.

How do we get this honey for the right price to Europe at the current **valid regulations** and rules?

General (local) challenges that we see.

- 1) The country of origin; there must be permission from EU to export honey.
- 2) In that case, it must be known before whether the honey meets the strict EU rules and requirements. Has the honey been adequately analysed?
- 3) Can the honey be analysed and his analyses agreed. If not agreed. On what aspects / values is the honey rejected? Can we tackle / improve that?

Mr. Kerkvliet already indicated that local honey is sometimes mixed with a syrup. Pertinent banned for export to Europe.

4) Which packaging does the importer want. Is this packaging available and affordable? **It needs to be** Food Grade certified packaging. Which means everything that comes into contact with honey must be certified to be food safe.

5) Is there sufficient infrastructure available.

6) Is there an organization / person who can / will take care of the mandatory export documentation.

(Example set of health certificate / certificate of (country) origin, Bio Inspection certificate, packing list, Invoice, possibly additional quality certificates.

7) Not unimportant is financing. Finance of honey harvest / certificates etc. This is often beforehand. Before the importer has paid. How does the beekeeper get paid directly? For the beekeepers honey is their living and very valuable.

8) Is there enough honey (left)? To buy from the beekeepers. The intention is also to leave honey in the hives.

9) Once honey is analysed and approved in steel barrel, ... ship! Storage as short as possible. Send samples as quickly as possible. Maximum 4 weeks after harvest!

10) On arrival, the honey is checked again. In the port of Rotterdam by veterinary doctor of nVWA. The quality department also takes samples from the batch delivered and the raw material is only used if the quality has been agreed upon.

Advantage tropical honey:

Taste (diversity), colour, F / G ratio (flow / crystallization free at least 3 months). Availability of larger volumes (Mexico).

Disadvantage of tropical honey:

Water content, increased and difficult to get down due to the climate conditions. Moisture content at 20% is high and risky for packers. Chance of accelerated fermentation and fermentation.

HMF

Infrastructure and available liquid assets at suppliers / producers.

CASE Example name:

BIO + FAIRTRADE certified honey from Nicaragua in 2017 and 2018.

- Locally on top with the right person.
- Rabo Rural Fund as funding party in between. Based on De Traay contract.
- As an importer on the right track.
- Know what you get and how to deal with the honey. Giving good advice to suppliers.

Led to:

From hardly any exports to; in the first year 5 containers 100 tonnes, now 2nd year 10 containers + 200 tonnes of honey. All Bio and Fair Trade certified. And according to EU regulations.

Mission accomplished. Currently continuously working to improve. Thanks for your attention.