



SO YOU WANT TO SELL YOUR  
HONEY OR BEE PRODUCTS AT  
A FARMERS MARKET OR  
CRAFT FAIR?

Well, there are some things to consider...

before you take over the world with your new honey or bee products business.



# First and Foremost

- ❑ Consider other beekeepers!
- ❑ Someone may already be attending the fair or market.
- ❑ Most beekeepers put a lot of time and energy to build up their customer base.
- ❑ They develop lasting relationships with the market manager, fair organizers, and their customers.
- ❑ A lot of effort goes into producing a line of bee products.
- ❑ For a lot of beekeepers, this is their livelihood.

# So there is already a beekeeper there!

- Be mindful and considerate – withdraw!
- Most markets or fairs can not support more than one beekeeper.
- Unlike farmers who can offer different things. Beekeepers are limited.
- Also talk to the other beekeeper, chances are you already know them.
- Competition is a good thing, but...

# There is no beekeeper there – What next?

- There are several things to consider before you embark on this new phase of your beekeeping journey
  - ❑ State and Town Laws
  - ❑ Product Regulations
  - ❑ Insurance
  - ❑ These are all very important things that you must consider before you sell your honey or bee products.

# Insurance

- Most farmers markets and now a lot of craft fairs require that you have insurance. They usually require a binder that covers about a million dollars in insurance.
- Why do I need insurance?
  - ❑ Because you are selling a product where there is potential for a lawsuit if someone becomes ill or worse from a bad product.
  - ❑ This is protection for both you and for the event organizers.

# Insurance

- What should I do?
  - Well this is complicated. Homeowners insurance companies may issue you a rider for business, but if they find out you have beehives and that you are a beekeeper, they can cancel you on your next anniversary date. So be careful if you do contact your insurance company and ask questions without giving away too much information.

# Insurance (MORE)

- What are my choices?
  - Farm Family Insurance is the only one in the state that I know of that issues farm insurance. This means you will have to switch your current homeowners insurance policy over to Farm Family Insurance. Your new policy will include your home, land, and farming (beekeeping) and will also include a product liability policy for your new bee business.

# Insurance (MORE)

- What is this going to cost me?
  - It should actually be just about the same as your current policy.
- Who do I call?
  - Sheila McCarthy [Sheila.McCarthy@american-national.com](mailto:Sheila.McCarthy@american-national.com)

# Product Regulations (FDA)

- Unless the government hires 1,000s of new employees, you wont be hearing much from them. But you must consider this:
  - ▣ The safety of your customer must always come first.
  - ▣ Your products must be safe.
  - ▣ Visit the government website:  
[www.fda.gov/Cosmetics](http://www.fda.gov/Cosmetics)

# Product Regulations (FDA)

- A few Guidelines:
  - ❑ Make sure your products are safe.
  - ❑ Make sure you label your products or have literature that explains what your ingredients are, how you make your products, the equipment you use.
  - ❑ The more information you have available, the better.
- Honey only has to be labeled as 100% Pure Honey.
  - ❑ Raw? Filtered? Organic? Don't get me started.
- Be considerate. Think about what you would want to know about a home-made product.

# Allergies

- ❑ Be careful with your products because a lot of people have allergies, so post a sign, inform people, and ask questions.
- ❑ Know your ingredients. Did you know that apricot oil is in the same family as almonds?
- ❑ You don't have to divulge your secret recipes, but people should know what they are buying.
- ❑ If there is any questions, either have the customer test the products, or let go of the sale. Its not worth it to have someone harmed.

# Products Summary

- Best piece of advice: use the safest methods, high quality ingredients, good packaging, great labeling, and let your customer be informed before they buy something from you. Best Beekeeping Practices for making your products. SAFTEY IS FIRST.
- Most of us will fly under the radar as far as the FDA is concerned. Honestly is the best policy.

# State and Town Laws

- You do not need to be a business (S Corp, C Corp, LLC, etc) to sell products unless you want to.
  - ▣ If you do declare this on your taxes, keep good records. You will probably have to do this on a Schedule C as a sole proprietor and you will use your SSN.
  - ▣ Sales Tax: Most of our products are food, so there is no sales tax. There is no organized enforcement of state laws for collecting sales tax from small vendors. Just be informed and make a decision that you are comfortable with.

# Town Laws

- You will run into this a lot. The Board of Health.
  - ❑ Most markets and some fairs will ask that you register with the BOH of each town you exhibit in.
  - ❑ Most do not charge but if they do, it can range from \$50 to \$100 per show or per season
  - ❑ Some of your products may not be sold if you are not Safeserve certified and have a Safeserve kitchen. This costs time and money and may not be worth it.

# Lets talk about selling your products!

- Logo
  - ❑ Design a logo, choose colors, fonts, images, and make sure you are happy with it, and that all your information is correct. SPELLCHECK everything.
- Packaging
  - ❑ Chose packaging that enhances your logo and represents the wonderful products you have created.
- Display
  - ❑ Create a table that represents all the hard work you have put in to your productions, is respectful of the work the bees have done.

# Lets talk about selling your products!

- Brochures
  - ❑ I would advise creating one that tells a bit about what you are doing and why. People always love a story.
- Promote beekeeping
  - ❑ This is your change to tell your beekeeping story. To let people know about the struggle of the honeybees.
  - ❑ Promote the bee school
  - ❑ Education youth groups, schools, civic groups, etc.

# Now lets talk about bottling honey!

- But first: Please, please, please:
  - ❑ Take great pride in all that you do with your products.
  - ❑ Show respect for the work the bees do.
  - ❑ Honor how much work it takes to be a beekeeper today.
- And above all: FILL YOUR HONEY JARS TO THE CORRECT LEVELS.