



# Sensory Attributes of Honey

Developed for the National Honey Board by rtech laboratories from Land O' Lakes, St. Paul, Minnesota

## Method

Thirteen trained panelists evaluated samples with three replications during two testing sessions. Panelists received ten grams of each sample in a one-ounce covered plastic soufflés cup. Samples were held and served at room temperature under white lights. Panelists cleansed their palates with low sodium saline crackers and carbon-filtered water between tastings.

Appearance, aroma, flavor, nose/mouthfeel, and aftertaste/afterfeel were assessed. Panelists were not informed of the objective of the test or that they would be testing different floral varieties of honey. The descriptive terms used by the panel only represent a perception that is common to them and should not be interpreted as general positive or negative attributes.

**Table 1. Summary of Main Descriptive Characteristics**

<b>Floral Variety</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
<b>Avocado Honey</b>	Molasses/Brown Sugar Flavor and Metallic/Iron Flavor
<b>Blackberry Honey</b>	Low Flowery Perfume Aroma, Transparent Appearance, Thick Viscous Appearance, High Sweet Flavor, High Clover Nectar Flavor.
<b>Blueberry Honey</b>	Low viscosity, Flowery Perfume Aroma, Green (unripened fruit) Aroma and Lemon Aroma and Fruity Flavor
<b>Buckwheat Honey</b>	Dark Color, Sharp and Medicinal Aroma, Barny, Medicinal, Green (unripened fruit) and Bitter Flavor, Pungent Aromatic (nose-burn), Molasses/Brown Sugar Aftertaste and Lingering Flavor
<b>Clover Honey</b>	Sweet Aroma, Clover Nectar Aroma, Spicy Cinnamon Aroma, Low Sharp Aroma, Light Appearance, High Transparent Appearance, Low Thick Viscous Appearance, High Sweet Flavor, Clover Nectar Flavor, Waxy Flavor
<b>Eucalyptus Honey</b>	Sweet Aroma, Clover Nectar Aroma, Sweet Flavor, Clover Nectar Flavor, Lingering Flavor, Sweet Aftertaste
<b>Gallberry Honey</b>	High Flowery Perfume Aroma, Dark Appearance, Thick Viscous Appearance, High Spicy Cinnamon Flavor, High Flowery Perfume Flavor, Low Fruity Flavor, Tea Flavor, Hot Bite Mouthfeel, Flowery Perfume Aftertaste
<b>Orange Blossom Honey</b>	Sweet, Flowery Perfume, Clover Nectar, and Beeswax Aroma, Sweet, Flowery Perfume, Clover Nectar, and Beeswax Flavor, Sweet and Flowery Perfume Aftertaste
<b>Safflower Honey</b>	Clover Nectar Aroma, Spicy Cinnamon Aroma, Moderately Dark Appearance, Moderate on all Flavor and Aftertaste Characteristics (no extreme highs or lows), Pungent Aromatic Nose Feel and Hot Bite Mouthfeel and Aftertaste.
<b>Sage Honey</b>	Thick/Viscous with Clover Nectar Flavor
<b>Saw Palmetto Honey</b>	Sweet Aroma, Clover Nectar Aroma, Dark Appearance, Spicy Cinnamon Flavor, Anise Flavor, Molasses Prune Flavor and Aftertaste.



<b>Sage</b>		H					L	L				L	L
<b>Saw Palmetto</b>													
<b>Sourwood</b>	L	L			L		H						
<b>Soybean</b>													
<b>Star Thistle</b>													
<b>Sunflower</b>				L			L						
<b>Tupelo</b>				H		H							

**NOSE/MOUTHFEEL**

	<b>Pungent Aromatic</b>	<b>Hot Bite</b>
<b>Avocado</b>		
<b>Blackberry</b>		
<b>Blueberry</b>		
<b>Buckwheat</b>	H	
<b>Clover</b>	L	
<b>Eucalyptus</b>		
<b>Gallberry</b>		
<b>Orange Blossom</b>		
<b>Safflower</b>		
<b>Sage</b>		L
<b>Saw Palmetto</b>		
<b>Sourwood</b>		
<b>Soybean</b>		
<b>Star Thistle</b>		
<b>Sunflower</b>		
<b>Tupelo</b>		

**AFTERTASTE/AFTERFEEL**

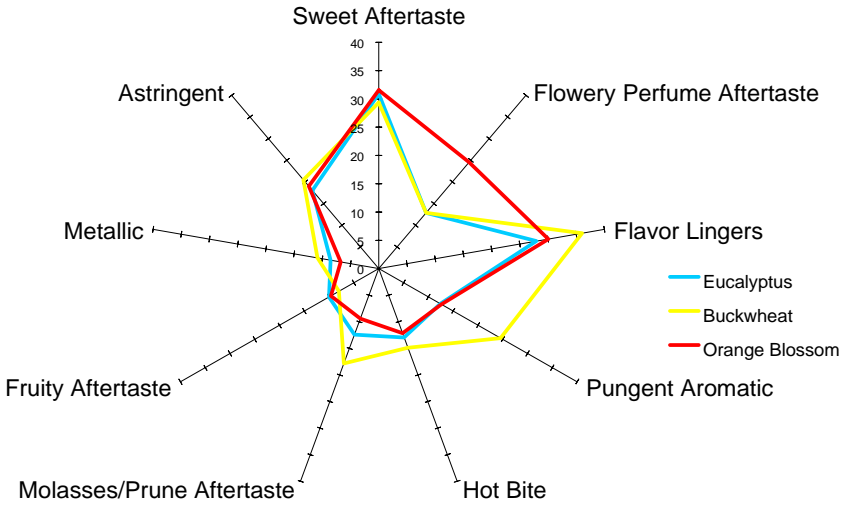
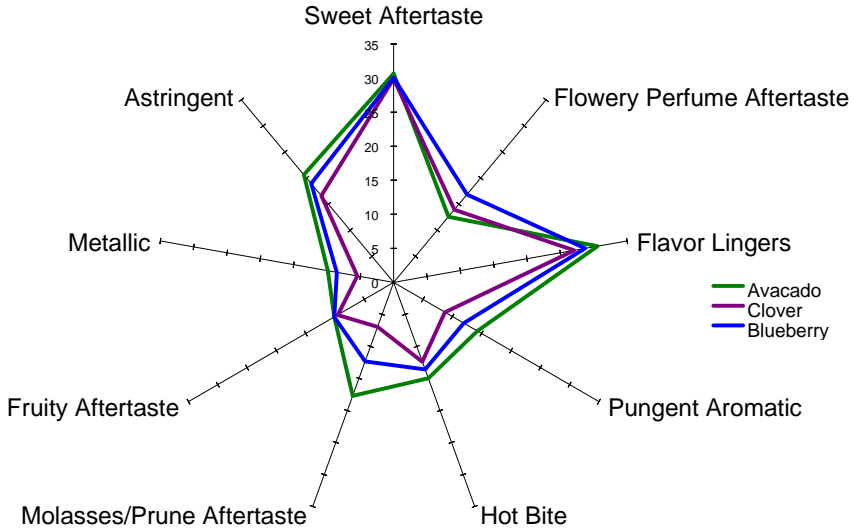
	<b>Sweet</b>	<b>Flowery Perfume</b>	<b>Molasses Prune</b>	<b>Fruity</b>	<b>Metallic</b>	<b>Astringent</b>	<b>Flavor Lingers</b>
<b>Avocado</b>		L					
<b>Blackberry</b>							
<b>Blueberry</b>			H				H
<b>Buckwheat</b>							
<b>Clover</b>							
<b>Eucalyptus</b>							
<b>Gallberry</b>							
<b>Orange Blossom</b>	H	H					
<b>Safflower</b>							
<b>Sage</b>			L		L	L	L
<b>Saw Palmetto</b>							
<b>Sourwood</b>						H	
<b>Soybean</b>							
<b>Star Thistle</b>							
<b>Sunflower</b>							
<b>Tupelo</b>		H		H			

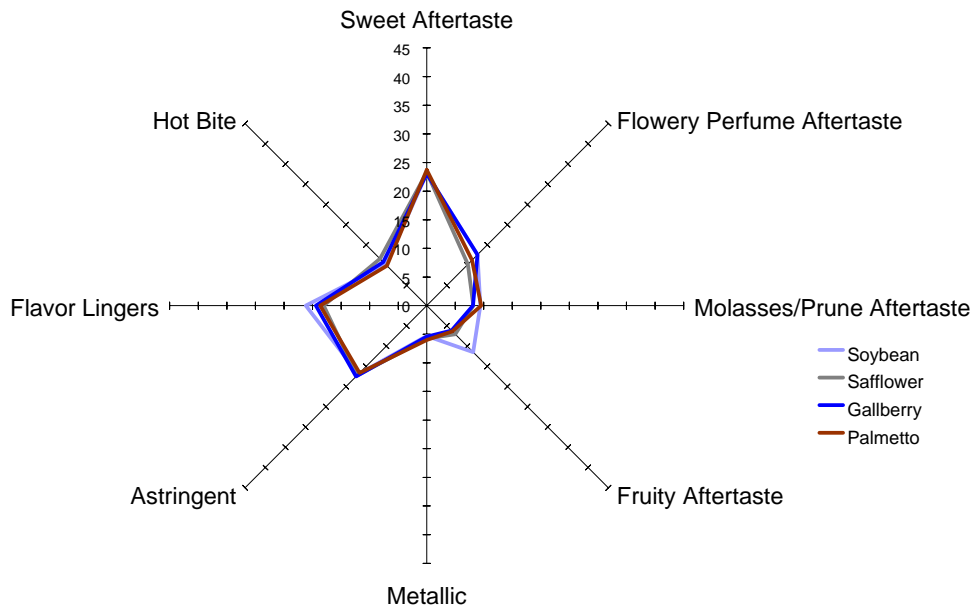
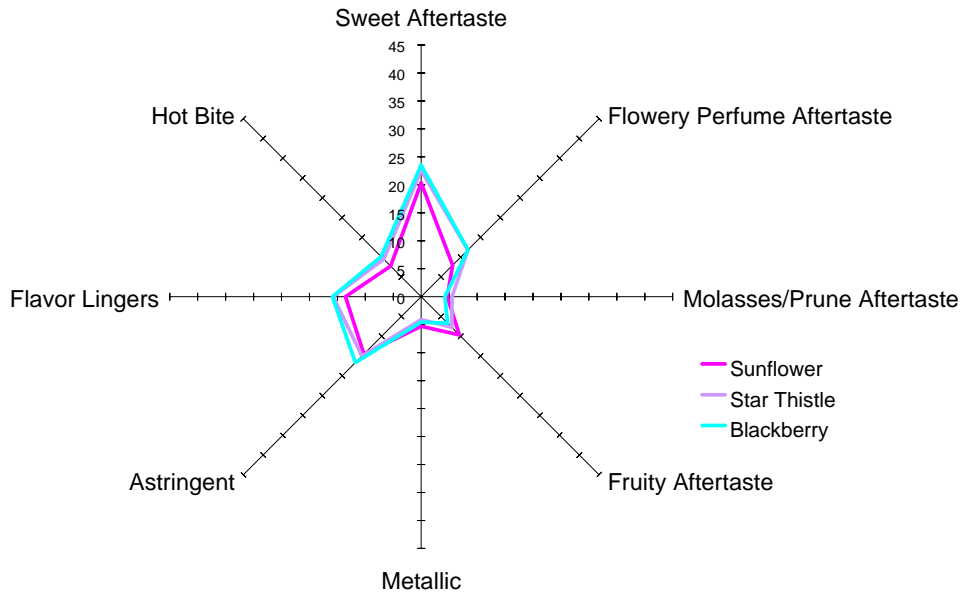
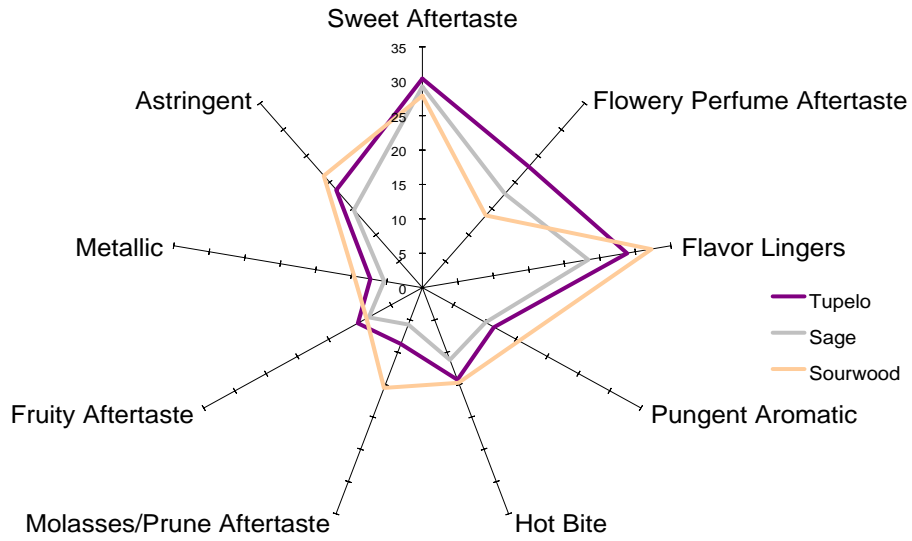
**NOSE/MOUTHFEEL ATTRIBUTES**

<b>Pungent Aromatic</b>	Intensity of pungent aromatic feel, stays in the nose and seems to burn the nose
<b>Hot Bite</b>	Degree to which sample has a bite that stings the tongue like a hot spice feeling

**AFTERTASTE/AFTERFEEL ATTRIBUTES**

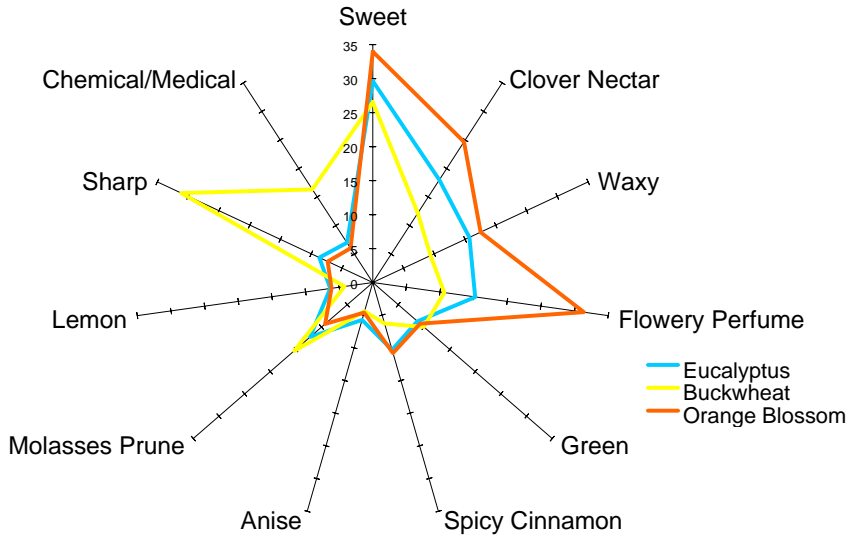
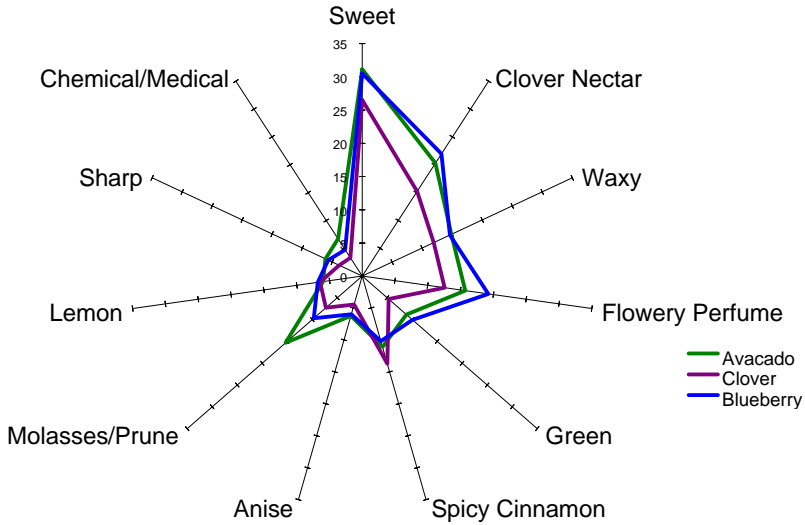
<b>Sweet</b>	Intensity of lingering sweet honey flavor remaining
<b>Flowery Perfume</b>	Intensity of a lingering perfume like or artificial perfume flavor remaining
<b>Molasses Prune</b>	Intensity of lingering flavor like molasses, brown sugar, a caramelized flavor, prunes, or raisins
<b>Fruity</b>	Intensity of lingering fruity flavor like apricot, not quite ripe mango, or peach
<b>Metallic</b>	Intensity of metallic flavor such as a lingering iron flavor remaining
<b>Astringent</b>	Degree to which mouthfeel is let dry on tongue and mount, astringent
<b>Flavor Lingers</b>	Degree to which flavor lingers in mouth for a long time from goes away quickly to lingers a long time

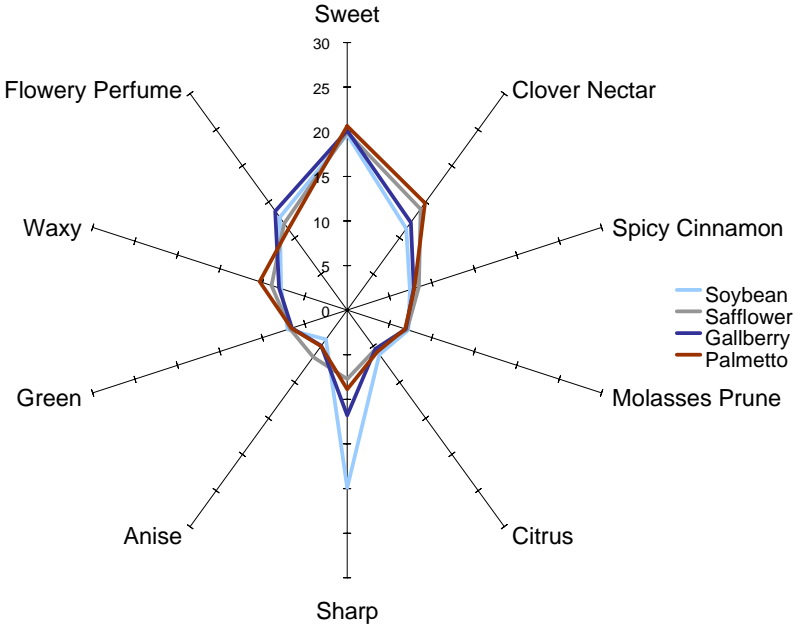
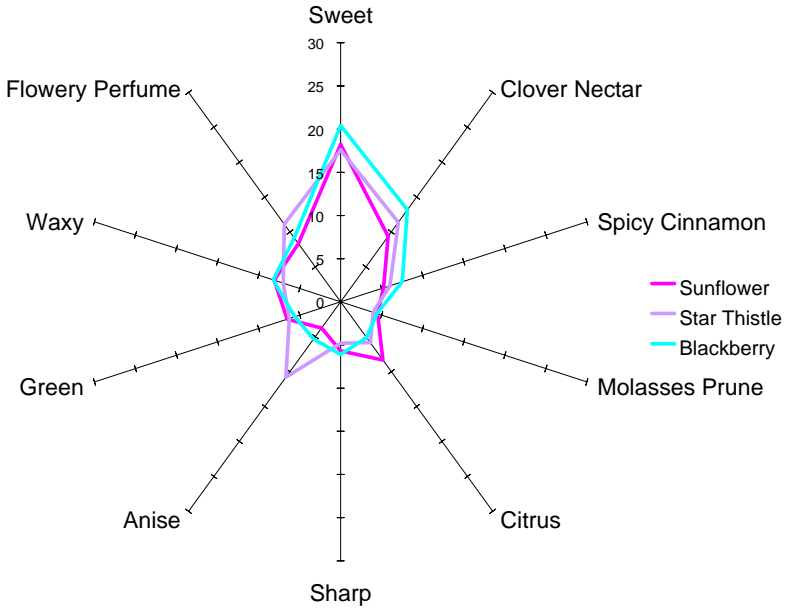
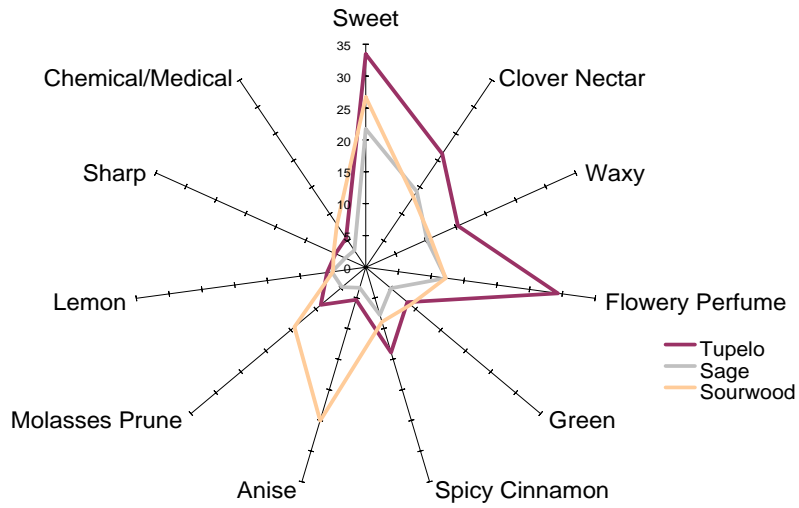




**AROMA ATTRIBUTES**

<b>Sweet</b>	<b>Intensity of sweet aroma, sweet as typically comes from honey</b>
<b>Clover Nectar</b>	<b>Intensity of aroma like clover nectar, a sweet flowery nectar but quite delicate</b>
<b>Green</b>	<b>Intensity of green aroma, this can include any green plant and green un-ripened fruit</b>
<b>Spicy Cinnamon</b>	<b>Intensity of spicy cinnamon like aroma, smells like red hots</b>
<b>Waxy</b>	<b>Intensity of waxy aroma like beeswax</b>
<b>Flowery Perfume</b>	<b>Intensity of flowery or perfumy aroma including white lilies or citrus blossom</b>
<b>Anise</b>	<b>Intensity of anise aroma like anise candy or black licorice</b>
<b>Molasses Prune</b>	<b>Intensity of aroma like molasses, sorghum molasses, prunes, raisins, horehound candy or brown sugar</b>
<b>Sharp</b>	<b>Intensity of a strong, sharp, barny aroma</b>
<b>Lemon</b>	<b>Intensity of lemon-like aroma</b>
<b>Chemical/Medicinal</b>	<b>Intensity of chemical or medicinal aroma may be like varnish</b>





## FLAVOR ATTRIBUTES

<b>Sweet</b>	Intensity of sweet flavor, a sweet typical of honey
<b>Clover Nectar</b>	Intensity of flavor like clover nectar
<b>Green</b>	Intensity of green flavor, this can include any green growing thing and green un-ripened fruit
<b>Spicy Cinnamon</b>	Intensity of spicy cinnamon like flavor, tastes like red hots
<b>Waxy</b>	Intensity of waxy flavor like beeswax
<b>Flowery Perfume</b>	Intensity of flowery or perfumy flavor including white lilies or citrus blossom
<b>Anise</b>	Intensity of anise flavor like black licorice or anise candy
<b>Molasses Prune</b>	Intensity of flavor like molasses, brown sugar, a caramelized flavor, horehound candy, prunes, or raisins
<b>Medicinal</b>	Intensity of medicine like or medicinal flavor, may be like varnish, outer part of the mango
<b>Fruity</b>	Intensity of fruity flavor like apricot, peach, lemon, orange
<b>Barny</b>	Intensity of barn-like flavor characteristic of some dark honey
<b>Metallic</b>	Intensity of metallic flavor or iron flavor
<b>Bitter</b>	Intensity of bitter flavor
<b>Tea</b>	Intensity of tea flavor

