

**National Honey Board
Meeting Minutes**

PRESIDING: Mindy Ryan Tharp Gehring, Chairperson

LOCATION: Thompson Hotel
1616 Market Street, Denver, CO

DATE: October 24th & 25th 2024

National Honey Board Members Present:

MindyRyan Tharp Gehring, Michelle Poulk, Thomas Sargeantson, Bjorn Anderson, Dustin Livermore, Dan Winter, Joseph Sanroma, Matt Halbgewachs

National Honey Board Members Absent:

Alan Turanski, Arlen Penner

National Honey Board Alternates Present:

Jeff Caley, Missy Foot, Maren Martin, David Coy, Patricia Sundberg

National Honey Board Alternates Absent:

Sarah Neves, Doug Hauke, Darren Cox

National Honey Board Staff:

Margaret Lombard, Kelly Werning, Catherine Barry, Jessica Schindler, Missy Boone Hall, Jocelyn Martinez, Darren Brown

AMS Present: Sam Mareno (USDA/AMS) – Day 1

Deanna Bakken (USDA/MAS) – Day 2

Guests Present:

Joyce Schlachter (Crockett Honey CO), Stacy Drab (Burleson Honey), Lauren Hall (ICI Foods), Nancy Burnett (Local Hive), Shannon Bowden (Bee Maid Honey), Leigh Samuels (Bar Hill), Arjun Chakravarti (Cogknition)

THURSDAY, April 24th, 2024

8:30 – 8:45 - CALL TO ORDER – MindyRyan Gehring

Thursday's session of the National Honey Board (NHB) meeting was convened at 8:33 a.m. by Margaret Lombard and MindyRyan called roll. Board Members, guests and Staff then introduced themselves.

ACTION ITEM I: TO SEAT ALTERNATE – Missy Foote in place of Alan Turanski.

Motion by Dan Winter, seconded by Bjorn Anderson and carried to approve.

ACTION ITEM II: TO SEAT ALTERNATE – Maren Martin in place of Arlen Penner.

Motion by Dan Winter, seconded by Joe Sanroma and carried to approve.

ACTION ITEM III: TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA

Motion by Tom Sargeantson, seconded by Joe Sanroma and carried to approve the consent agenda.

ACTION ITEM IV: TO ACCEPT THE SPRING 2024 MINUTES

Motion by Joe Sanroma, seconded by Maren Martin and carried to approve the 2024 Spring Minutes.

8:45 – 9:10 WELCOME & Meeting Overview - Margaret Lombard (NHB)

Lombard welcomed all the guests, board members, and alternates to the meeting. She shared summaries on the following:

- Economic Overview – US Consumption - Demand, Domestic production, Imports, Prices & Assessment Increase
- Sweeteners & Aptitudes Study – Segmentation Study
- Artificial Intelligence
- Honey Saves Hives
- Ingredient Marketing
- Nutrition Research
- Retail Program – Reengineering in 2025 (Don Ladhoff Retiring)
- Measurements- what is working what is not
- Honeybee Health – 23 Proposals with Apis M

Asked everyone to please share their thoughts and ask questions – reminded the group about the photo opportunity during lunch.

9:10 – 9:15 AMS Report- Sam Mareno (AMS - USDA)

Management Review Update & Board Nominations

- Preparing for Election – expect things to slow down – Change in administration will take some time for things to settle down as people are appointed to their positions.
- Board Nominations have already been submitted through proper channels.
- No findings at this point with NHB Management Review.

9:15 – 9:45 2024 - Finance Update – Kelly Werning (NHB)

National Honey Board's CFO, Kelly Werning, introduced herself and began reviewing the most recent financial statements.

- Overview of Assets and Liabilities (Total \$3,271,589)
- Revenue (Net Assessments \$6,533,922 Total Revenue \$6,548,601)
- Program Expenses \$4,988,160 – G&A Expenses \$552,302 (Total \$5,540,462)
- Excess Revenue/(Expenses) \$1,008,139

Matt Halbgewachs asked, with such strong cash flow, can we invest?

Werning explained she is currently working with US Bank on the new investment options they are now offering to commodity boards and will have an update in the spring of what that will entail.

Matt Halbgewachs asked, is this a normal amount for us to have on hand?

Werning, no, Imports are coming in high right now.

Jeff Caley asked, so the cash in the bank is not earning?

Werning, Our operating account accrues interest only.

The 2025 Budget Proposal

	2024 Amended Budget	2025 Proposed Budget
Estimated Cash in Bank	2,631,688	2,800,000
Prior Year Carryover Expenses	(837,255)	
TOTAL CASH CARRYOVER AVAILABLE	1,794,433	2,800,000
REVENUE:		
Assessments	7,250,000	7,500,000
Other	14,900	18,100
Net Revenue	7,264,900	7,518,100
Net Revenue Plus Carryover	9,059,333	10,318,100
PROGRAM EXPENDITURES:		
Total Research	1,206,164	1,221,478
Total Marketing/Promotion	5,760,558	7,023,324
Total Emerging Opportunities	100,000	100,000
Total Program Expenses	7,066,722	8,344,801
GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES:		
Total Administrative (Office)	685,611	666,298
Total Administrative (Board)	140,000	130,000
Total Administrative (Federal)	160,000	160,000
Total General & Administrative Expenses	985,611	956,298
Net Revenue & Carryover less Expenses	1,007,000	1,017,000
Reserves:		
Capital expenditures	7,000	17,000
Permanent reserve	200,000	200,000
Operating Cash Reserve	800,000	800,000
Total Reserves	1,007,000	1,017,000
Net Operating Reserve	(0)	0

Matt Halbgewachs asked, how is the 2025 Research budget determined?

Werning, we are required to allocate 5% of forecasted net assessments to production research, but the Board can determine if they want to allocate more. For the 2025 budget, 5% is \$375,000, which is paid to PAM to conduct the research projects.

Jeff Caley asked, what are the other research items, can you break that down? Would more research funding come out of Emerging Ops?

Werning, no, Emerging Ops is for unbudgeted opportunities that may come up during the year. The Board can request more funding in the research budget, which will reduce the marketing program budget.

ML, there are technical research projects as well, not just production research.

CB, annual research includes, menu, new products, clinical trials, nutrition research, volumetrics studies, retail, industrial, wholesale, beauty/health.

Matt Halbgewachs, is the PAM budget always the same?

Werning, no, it is based on 5% of forecasted net assessments, which will vary year to year.

Compliance Update

Werning began by explaining that it is a requirement of the Order that NHB have a review program for domestic assessment payers. These reviews ensure that the assessments reported to NHB are accurate and supported by purchasing and production information. Domestic payers are on a rotating schedule to receive a review every three to four years.

- 10 Reviews
- 10 Completed
- Revenue collected \$4000
- Cost \$0

Michell Poulk asked, does NHB track or audit producers?

Werning, yes if we have reason to believe they might be packing over the threshold of 250K.

Margaret commented on how the remote audit program is so much better now and saves NHB money since staff are no longer needing to travel to complete the reviews.

Portal Updates

- Launched fall 2024
- FHR Feature
- Reimbursements
- Exemptions
- Reporting
- New Customs Process

Went through what is planned for 2025

- Customer facing reimbursement feature
- Auto email reminders
- Role and Function Improvements

- Payment processor Integrations

9:45 – 10:15 Honey Industry Economics’ Report – Arjun Chakravarti, PHD (COGKNITION Analytics)

Honey Long-range outlook at US Demand 2025-2035

Deck available upon request: email honey@nhb.org

Jeff Caley asked, is the US Census data used for the study?

Chakravarti, kind of, but he looks at a lot more data overall.

Joe Sanroma says, birth rates going down, immigration is challenging because they may have different diets than Americans and honey is not consumed as much in these cultures. Chakravarti, yes this is a factor that may affect the sale of honey and honey products.

Joe Sanroma comments, people are shifting to convenience shopping and eating.

David Coy asks, how do we penetrate these households?

Chakravarti, look at different scenarios and direct the marketing and research to reflect their background.

Missy, since consumers are aging and passing away and that is our biggest area of honey users, how will this affect the honey market?

Chakravarti, yes aging is going to be a factor. In line with Keith and what Laurie talks about, it is important to educate at a younger age to gain that area of consumer. It is also important to recalibrate marketing, to shift trends. Keep in mind there are more younger people living at home, they remain single, and fewer families. Along with the minorities they also have less income than older generations. It is important to increase household penetration.

10:15 – 10:30 NHB Financials / Assessment Increase

Moved to Thursday’s Closed Session

10:45 – 11:00 Marketing Program Overview – Catherine Barry (NHB)

Catherine Barry, Vice President of Marketing, shared elements of the Strategic Plan including the mission, vision and purpose. Barry discussed how it continues to serve as the roadmap for all NHB marketing programs. Additionally, the top program implications and priorities were detailed including increasing consumption, demonstrating value, tying programs to honey purchase, telling the global honey story, educating the next generation, and fostering industry collaboration.

A major focus for the NHB marketing program is to develop activations and campaigns that are geared toward educating and influencing the NHB target audience. Based on the latest research,

there was an opportunity to revisit the target audience definition and update it based on current consumer attitudes, preferences and perceptions. Barry then introduced the NHB's new target audience - the Natural Nourishers. The differences between the two audiences was reviewed and how the NHB would be funding additional research to better understand the target at a deeper level.

Barry then went on to review the NHB's strategic marketing platform: *Good For Me & Good For The Planet*. However, with the update to the new target audience, a third pillar of culinary curiosity was added to the platform. Also, the NHB marketing programs will focus tactics on rebalancing the reasons "why" to use honey with practical ways in "how" they can utilize honey in their daily lives.

The NHB has established relationships with several agencies to help execute strategy-based programs in each of the NHB's key focus areas: consumer, retail, foodservice, F&B manufacturing, Nutrition Research and Bee Health Research. Barry then shared what each of our marketing agency partners focus on and specialize in:

- **The Hartman Group:** Consumer Research & Insights and Strategic Consulting
- **Porter Novelli:** Consumer Media Relations, Influencer Management, Nutrition Research, Reputation Management and Industry Communication
- **Brightly Creative:** F&B Ingredient Marketing, Technical Research and Industry Summit
- **Sterling-Rice Group (SRG):** Strategy & Brand Management, Nutrition Professionals Outreach and Foodservice Marketing & Media Relations
- **FreshSmartSolutions:** Retail & Shopper Marketing Promotions
- **Barbara Lyle, Ph.D.:** Nutrition Research
- **Project Apis m.:** Bee Health Research Oversight
- **NHB Staff:** In-house Programs & Digital Communications

With Don Ladhoff with FreshSmartSolutions retiring at the end of 2024, the NHB has plans to conduct an agency search for retail and shopper marketing efforts.

No questions asked

11:00 – 11:45 Research Update: 2024 Use & Attitude Study & New Segmentation Study – Laurie Demeritt (The Hartman Group)

Laurie Demeritt, CEO of The Hartman Group, presented key findings from the recent Honey Attitudes and Usage 2024 study. Insights and strategic implications from the report include:

- The updated segment of Natural Nourishers warrant special attention to maintain and grow usage and engagement with honey
- There is an additional target, the Young Pragmatists, who reflect important wellness trends and comprise a worthwhile target for additional influence
- While honey is most closely associated with breakfast, it is used at eating occasions across the day, in cooking, with foods and beverages, and for medicinal purposes

- Consumers identify and understand many of the benefits of honey including it being natural and healthy, but fewer recognize the full range of health implications
- As with many products currently, price is a barrier to purchase of honey and has increased in impact since last year so it is important to show the value of honey beyond the price
- The health halo of honey is reinforced by its associations with purity and naturalness
- The success of hot honey has opened up new usage occasions for honey and has shown the power of flavor

Jeff Caley asked if the younger generations are more inclined to protect the bees?

Demeritt, yes, they are more engaged and relate it back to themselves and what is good for them.

MindyRyan asked, Do you find that breakfast is more just on the weekend?

Demeritt, the morning breakfast is extending more throughout the day and is not as defined as it was in the past. Most people are on the run and eat when and what they can during the lunch hours, while dinner is more about nutrition and time with family.

Demeritt, the data shows lunch and dinner are areas for growth, along with beverages, baking and non-food usage. It is also important to promote and market the value beyond the dollar amount. Enhancing education in younger generations is key, providing ideas on how to use honey as well as the nutritional benefits.

1:00 – 1:30 – Artificial Intelligence & the Food Industry – Matt McPherson (Porter Novelli)

Matt MacPherson, Porter Novelli, shared the latest on artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities and how these new tools are impacting industries. Generative AI is algorithmic tools that can create content; audio, code, images, text, simulations and videos by responding to prompts from users and generating outputs based on data it gathers from publicly available sources. Generally, AI does not produce anything truly new, rather detect patterns and make predictions from existing data.

AI is being adopted across the workforce, but there are key considerations to keep in mind:

1. AI is replacing tasks, not entire jobs
2. The role of the individual remains crucial
3. Organizations must become AI-driven to survive

AI is transformative to how teams work, specifically around data analytics, predictive modeling, automating tasks and adhering to regulations. For the greater food industry, AI is seeing increased adoption. Many food companies are using AI to assist with assortment planning and replenishment and to leverage customer data. Some food companies are branching out and using AI to optimize decision-making around pricing and promotion, for loss prevention, supply chain logistics/scheduling and even for hiring purposes. For farmers, AI tools can accurately predict a crop's future growth, health, and yields, based on just a single snapshot of the plant, and help guide farmers on how to raise crops more sustainably without sacrificing yields.

Specific to honey, there are some AI driven companies out there attempting to optimize environmental factors:

- A Belgian start-up called BeeOdiversity is claiming to help bees thrive: its founder invented a system that knocks a tiny bit of pollen off the worker bees as they return to the hive – enough for research, but not so much as to rob the bees of nutrition. Using laboratory analysis and AI models to establish some correlations between results, BeeOdiversity can identify more than 500 pesticides and heavy metals, as well as the plants in the area.
- Honey.AI combines robotics, image processing, and artificial intelligence for automated honey quality tests and source identification. Users take digital images onsite with the Honey.AI microscope which utilizes image recognition software to analyze the pictures and give a detailed result to the user about specific pollen concentration per area analyzed.

A few things to keep in mind when using AI: these are machine based learning tools and they don't always get everything right 100% of the time. It's important to double check accuracy - don't trust AI outputs blindly. It's built by humans so naturally there will be human bias, which needs to be accounted for. AI is not here to replace relationships and it's best not to share any sensitive information you don't want it to remember and use to inform future outputs.

MindyRyan, is AI more regionally located, such as on the coast or larger populated areas?

McPherson, no, data shows that it is nationally used, there may be more conversations about it on the coastal or more populated areas, but he is seeing it being deployed nationally.

Maren Martin asked if beekeepers could use AI to predict crop production?

McPherson, yes and that is definitely happening across the country, the technology is already being used by the agriculture community.

Missy, what is it, is it an app? McPherson, no it is a company, and there are multiple companies that offer AI technology.

McPherson, the Almond Board currently uses it to watch trends. BeeOdiversity is regenerating value Honey.AI

Jeff Caley, this is exciting for those tracking honey!

MindyRyan, have there been studies done regarding accuracy?

McPherson, there are other applications that users can use to validate accuracy. Fake news is the biggest danger in the world. Threats of AI spreading misinformation and fake content is a large concern.

Jeff Caley, "how can honey be used in processed food"; ChatGPT can give the answer. Nielsen info isn't always organically written, there are countless ways to use AI to track honey usages.

McPherson, yes, both backwards data and then also use it to brainstorm new ideas

1:30 – 1:45 NHB Measurement Scorecard – Laurel Muir (Sterling-Rice Group)

Laurel Muir, Sterling-Rice Group, shared the measurement work that is underway across programs as the NHB team works to standardize and streamline measurement to the Board of Directors strategic plan and key performance initiatives. Muir shared the updated scorecards with plans to continue refining the process and outputs.

No questions asked

1:45 – 2:30 Ingredient Marketing Update – Keith Seiz (Brightly Creative)

Keith Seiz, Brightly Creative, provided an update on the Ingredient Marketing Program and the state of the packaged food industry, where new product introductions continue to decline. Despite cost-cutting being the top priority for 59% of R&D professionals, honey's use in key categories grew, driven by a new data-based advertising campaign emphasizing honey's value to consumers, the food industry and product development.

The campaign, coupled with targeted outreach, facilitated high-level meetings with major food manufacturers, including Kellanova and ConAgra. This year, the Ingredient Marketing introduced an innovation focus, highlighted by a Peanut Butter & Honey Pop-Tart prototype developed for Kellanova, which was sampled at the Board Meeting.

Virtual Honey Industry Summits remain a powerful educational tool for the Ingredient Marketing program, with 18 summits since 2020 leading to new product launches, including two from PepsiCo's Lay's brand.

Now in its second full year, the University Outreach initiative continues to exceed expectations, engaging with five universities and sponsoring two product competitions at Purdue and Cornell.

Looking ahead to 2025, the Ingredient Marketing Program will reinforce its value messaging, with a strategic focus on the beverage and snacking categories, where honey faces increasing competition from alternative sweeteners.

Matt Halbgewachs asked, do you have any idea of new product success?

Seiz, no data, it is hard to track and costs a lot.

Missy Foote, when you get to shows, can you offer to meet with them the day before?

Seiz, yes, retail baking then RD, later in the same day.

2:30 – 2:45 Honey Saves Hives Update – Keith Seiz (Brightly Creative) & Jess Buchanan (Porter Novelli)

Jess Buchanan, Porter Novelli, and Keith Seiz, Brightly Creative, walked through results from the 2024 PR programming, starting with the results from the annual Honey Saves Hives program. Now in its fifth year, Honey Saves Hives launched its first ever video series on TikTok, featuring recipes that highlighted the versatility of honey. These videos reached an audience of 5.2 million TikTok accounts and drove viewers to a honey-specific page on Instacart, another first for the program. Instacart accounted for \$145,000 sales of honey and made-with-honey products during National Honey Month, when the TikTok series ran. Honey Saves Hives also featured a media event, hosted at the James Beard House in New York, where 20 journalists from Good Morning America, Forbes, Food Network and more, learned about honey from hive to table.

The 2025 Honey Saves Hives campaign featured seven food brand partnerships, including Caledonia Spirits and Kodiak Cakes, which joined in 2024. The Ingredient Marketing Program also brought its National Honey Month retail bakery program into Honey Saves Hives, which included 25 partners from retail bakeries throughout the United States. The purpose of all Honey Saves Hives activities are to showcase the relationship between purchasing honey and supporting beekeepers and honey bees.

No questions asked

2:45 – 3:15 Consumer PR Update – Jess Buchanan (Porter Novelli)

Jess Buchanan then discussed other consumer PR programs that included two partnerships with influencers, beekeeper Hilary Kearny of Girl Next Door Honey, and chef and foodie Samah Dada. These women brought to life how honey is made and how to incorporate it into different mealtimes, respectively, highlighting how important honey is to our broader food supply. In addition, ongoing partnerships with multiple media-friendly Registered Dietitians (RDs) to provide commentary, social media content, attendance at key conferences and partnerships with Retail RD networks to help disseminate nutrition research updates and keep honey top of mind among consumers.

Looking forward to the National Honey Board's pivot to a new target audience in 2025, Jess also shared several new programming ideas for 2026 that leverage the new target's interest in wellness and gourmet cooking. These included exploring honey's use in mocktails in Dry January and incorporating honey into global flavors through partnership with international food halls.

No questions asked

3 :30 – 3 :45 Digital & Social Media Update – Jocelyn Martinez (NHB)

Jocelyn Martinez, Digital Communications Specialist for the NHB, went over the various social media platforms the NHB uses in its digital communications, touching on YOY growth. She covered the size of each platform's audience, including two new audiences – TikTok and Threads.

Martinez discussed each active platform and the top performing content for each channel. She also touched on the in-house e-newsletters and the Honey4Pros channels.

Elaborated on LinkedIn including tops performing content, the new strategy and how it will come to life with example posts.

Touched on the results from the in-house arm of the Honey Saves Hive campaign during National Honey Month. Reviewed the partners involved, as well as the tools and tactics used to reach over 2.38 MM users with over 2.5 MM impressions generating more than 5.6 k engagements.

Martinez went through the topics currently trending in social media forecasts for 2025. Topics included video, user-generated content (UGC), artificial intelligence (AI), personal branding, micro-influencers, sustainability and social responsibility.

Wrapped up with key learnings and how they will impact the 2025 social media strategy and offered up some program plus-ups.

No questions asked

3:45 – 4:00 In-house Programs Update – Jessica Schindler (NHB)

Jessica Schindler, Marketing Manager for the NHB, gave the board an update on the in-house events that have been executed in 2024.

The Today's Dietician Spring Symposium was a valuable event for the NHB to participate in for 2023, staff made sure honey had a presence in 2024. The smaller, more intimate group of Health Professionals (HP) experienced Salt Lake City for the conference, coincidentally known as the "Beehive State." Staff members Catherine Barry and Jessica Schindler worked the booth for the two-day conference, sharing with attendees the newest research and educational materials the honey industry has to offer. Staff also spoke to the group about honey, honey bees and helped answer questions for the Registered Dietitians (RDs) in attendance.

The next nutrition focused event the NHB exhibited at is the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics Food Nutrition Conference & Expo (FNCE). FNCE is a 3-day event that brought together 7K health professionals in many fields, including the health sector, education, foodservice, hospitality, private practice and more. The NHB team consisting of Catherine Barry, Jessica Schindler and Jocelyn Martinez spoke to eager attendees, wanting to learn more about the latest honey research and how HPs & RDs can speak to their patients about honey and the invaluable work honey bees do for our ecosystem.

A unique addition for the 2024 conference is that the NHB sponsored a culinary demo with NHB spokesperson Tracy Lockwood Beckerman, an RD and Certified Dietetics and Nutritionist, who is a leading women's health expert and nationally recognized registered dietitian. The demo brought together a more intimate group of attendees for an overview of honey within the Mediterranean

Diet eating patterns, with research, as well as a culinary demonstration of the Honey Roasted Carrots and Quinoa Salad recipe.

FNCE is a worthwhile conference for honey as many of the other commodity board exhibit, so having a presence and the opportunity to keep honey at top of mind for health professionals is invaluable.

The spring board meeting location was chosen to highlight one of the biggest partnerships within the in-house program, the Disney Epcot Flower and Garden Festival. The NHB is in its seventh year of sponsorship with the Honey Bee-stro marketplace, and staff is thrilled to be able to bring the honey industry to experience the marketplace in person.

The marketplace is prided on reinforcing the connection between eat honey and helping the honey bees for park goers. The NHB works to educate on pollination and the various crops that benefit from the honey bees, not “just” the delicious honey we enjoy. This is done through the many educational board and displays found throughout the Honey Bee-stro marketplace.

The honeybee antennas have been a fun addition for park goers and the Disney team came to the NHB to see if we could again, increase the offerings from 15K to 25K in 2024. The sweet little headbands are given out to park goers at strategic times throughout the festival, corresponding with Opening Weekend, Earth Day and World Bee Day.

Schindler wrapped up the in-house presentation with some ideas to expand the program in future years, to include exploring opportunities outside the booth exhibition at nutrition events, expand our Disney partnership coast to coast with the Disneyland park and possibly the energy message of honey with their runDisney events and finally revisiting the food and wine festivals across the united states to showcase honey’s versatility throughout the menu.

No questions asked

FRIDAY, October 25th

8:30 – 9:00 - Executive Session (Closed) NHB Board Members & Alternates Only

GENERAL SESSION

Mindy Ryan Tharp Gehring called meeting to order at 9:45 am

9:00 – 9:30 Retail Program Update -Don Ladhoff (FreshSmartSolutions)

Don Ladhoff, FreshSmartSolutions, reviewed the three strategies that NHB Retail Programs implemented during 2024 and provided details on the results achieved in each area. Specifically, the three strategies were 1) engage and educate retailers on opportunities to increase their honey category sales using Nielsen sales data overlaid with NHB shopper insights and recommendations, 2) drive added awareness and sales during National Honey Month through savings offer delivered via Ibotta and 3) partner with a complementary CPG brand to implement joint promotions centered around National Honey Month.

In executing the first strategy, the NHB secured meetings with Honey Category Managers at five retailers: Lowes Foods, Dierbergs, United Supermarkets, Food City and Brookshire Grocery. The comprehensive business reviews conducted shared insights & implications garnered from NHB's A&U studies, examined dollar and volume trends versus the competitive market, and drilled down to look at branded vs. P/L honey sales as well as organic honey sales plus breakdowns by package size and floral source.

The category reviews also included pricing analyses, assessments of promotional efficiency and comparisons of trends and sales velocities between honey and adjacent spreads. Lastly, during the reviews NHB shared best practices for assortment, pricing and promotion, along with identifying opportunities for increasing honey sales and providing recommended actions.

With the second strategy, NHB offered a \$1.00 reward offer during National Honey Month (September) on any purchase of honey 16oz size or larger. Ibotta users could redeem the reward by purchasing honey at any of 204 retailers operating over 35,000 store locations nationwide. In addition, we drove additional awareness of the reward with a banner ad running week of September 12 that generated over 100K incremental impressions.

The results of the Ibotta offer? The reward offer generated 5.9MM impressions during the month of September, with 603K viewers clicking through to unlock the reward. There were 61,705 redemptions (i.e. honey units sold) yielding a strong redemption rate of 10.2% and which drove over \$500K in retail sales!

Implementing the third and final strategy turned out to be more challenging. NHB solicited companies including General Mills, Post Consumer Brands, Flowers Foods and Chobani without success. We had interest from the Justin's nut butter brand and spent several months talking with their shopper marketing agency but nothing ever came together. We subsequently re-engaged with Celestial Seasonings and spent three months developing and refining a joint offer, but they ultimately chose to shelve the promotion although they did express interest in looking at other opportunities during 2025. And shortly after the fall

Board meeting occurred we had a promising conversation with Lipton teas, who stated that they would be very interested in exploring a partnership with NHB during the coming year.

David Coy asked, the one that was in the produce section, was that a local or national brand? Ladhoff, local but they have 5 stores in 5 states.

9:30 – 10:00 Foodservice Marketing Update – Amy Shipley (Sterling-Rice Group)

Amy Shipley, Sterling-Rice Group, reviewed the progress of the 2024 National Honey Board Foodservice programs. She started her presentation with a recap of the latest foodservice industry updates from Technomic and Datassentials and implications for the National Honey Board.

Shipley also shared program highlights and results from the 2024 NHB foodservice activities, including advertising, innovation, experiential and partnership/LTO activity followed by insights and learnings to be applied to 2025. Last, Shipley outlined potential new programming in 2025 that will be explored within the planning process.

Missy Foote, Does that include Ketchup?
Shipley, yes! Honey is the NUMBER 1 sauce!

Matt Halbgewachs, how is that measured?
Shipley, it is measured by menu penetration.

Missy Foote, remind me what is fast casual?
Shipley, \$12-18 dollar meals, Chipotle, Mod Market type restaurants.

MindyRyan, The test kitchen is really cool, the first day they made the recipes that were provided and on day 2 they created their own.

Missy Foot, there is so much work on developing new recipes, is there info we can have to give our customers?
Shipley, yes, I will make sure you get all of the info, the research, education etc.

ACTION ITEM V: TO APPROVE THE 2025 Budget

Motion by Dan Winter, seconded by Joe Sanroma and carried to approve the 2025 Budget.

ACTION ITEM VI: TO INCREASE THE ASSESSMENT (Generic \$0.05 cent per 2 years)
All board members are in favor, with one member opposed: Dustin Livermore

Motion by Joe Sanroma, seconded by Tom Sargeantson and motion carries.

ACTION ITEM VII: TO REVISIT THE TALLOW STUDY-To include Packers

Motion by Joe Sanroma, seconded by Dan Winter and motion carries.

10:15 – 10:45 Nutrition Research Studies Update – Barbara Lyle

Barbara Lyle, B. Lyle, Inc. in partnership with Porter Novelli, presented an update on human nutrition, noting she works closely with Kim Haider a dietitian from Porter Novelli to ensure results are translated in a relevant way for application to health professionals and NHB partnering agencies to amplify news about honey for health among food industry, health professionals, as well as consumers.

Lyle showed how results from technical scientific publications are amplified. One example is a NHB funded highly technical science publication on the composition of honey, which is currently being amplified in two ways. First, it is being added to the USDA FoodData Central database (the premier food composition database in the world). And second, the highly technical science paper was translated for health professionals in a content that is relevant and actionable for consumers. Before starting a research project, we start with a simple consumer relevant statement and then work with the researchers to ensure that their research addresses the statement. In this case, the scientific publication reports on the diversity of bioactive compounds. A health professional or consumer would find it too complex to read the scientific paper. However, a summary for health professionals has been written and when approved, will be posted on the NHB website. And of course all of the NHB agencies can amplify this translational message in their work.

In order to amplify research in media, we focus on topics currently resonating with media and in influencer (RD) circles. Because gut health is a hot topic, two studies funded by the NHB helped insert honey into an ongoing conversation about gut health. Two NHB funded studies on honey with yogurt for gut health were picked up by 16 consumer-facing publications (including Newsweek). Additionally, the investigator that led this research is also spoke at a media event and the study supported an e-blast to health professionals in Today's Dietitian magazine.

Next, Lyle summarized recently published research funded by the board to quantify sweetness of honey. The previously used value that honey is 1.5 times sweeter was based on a calculation using the fructose level in dried honey. This new research uses state-of-the-art sensory testing methods to develop sweetness intensity curves using 5 honey varieties. Results for food industry applications on a weight basis show that aromas in honey enhance sweetness on average by 23–43% depending on floral varietal delivering equivalent sweetness to sucrose, but with 20% less sugar. On a volume basis, which is how consumers use honey, honey is a double winner in that it provides more sweetness tsp for tsp. Specifically, you get the same sweetness in 0.6 tsp of honey compared to 1 tsp of table sugar, while getting the benefit of almost 1 gram less sugar and 3 kcal savings. Another interpretation if keeping volumes the same is that tsp for tsp, honey is 1.7 times sweeter than table sugar. Summaries for the industry and for health professionals are being prepared and NHB materials will be updated to reflect these results.

We encourage all board members to become familiar with and share with others resources about nutrition on the NHB website. <https://honey.com/nutrition/hp-resources>

Dan Winter says, the Honey Board should do a fact sheet to send out in regard to the data found in study.

Lyle, yes, working on this now and there will be one done soon.

10:45 – 11:15 Nutrition Professional & Consumer Advertising – Laurel Muir (Sterling-Rice Group)

Laurel Muir, Sterling-Rice Group, reviewed the latest updates on the 2024 Nutrition Professional advertising program, focused on reaching dietitians and nutritionists. Muir reminded attendees that the main objectives of the program are to 1) position honey as the preferred choice when it comes to sweeteners 2) keep honey top-of-mind when making recommendations to clients.

In 2024, the HCP program was focused on just one flight and maximized the budget through e-blasts in 2024.

Laurel Muir also shared the latest updates about the ongoing Celebrating Beekeeping campaign, which launched in May on YouTube and Meta. Celebrating Beekeeping is targeted at consumers and brings beekeeping stories to life. These stories help to share the honey bee lifecycle and provide transparency into the honey collection process across the globe. The latest video in the Celebrating Beekeeping series showcases beekeepers in Argentina, Vietnam and Brazil along with the collection of US stories that have been very popular in previous flights.

In addition, Laurel shared the new honey moments campaign that is launching as a test on TikTok. This exciting new work takes the research learnings around “honey moments” and brings the drizzle into new usage ideas. The work will launch this fall and provide learning opportunities for the future on TikTok reaching the new younger target audience, Young Pragmatists.

11:15 – 11:30 Celebrating Beekeeping Photo Journal – Jonathan Galbreath (Brightly Creative)

Jonathan Galbreath, Brightly Creative, closed the Fall Board Meeting by sharing a photo journal of images taken in Argentina and Brazil, as part of the Celebrating Beekeeping video series. The images highlighted honey’s natural origins and its importance to family farmers worldwide. These visuals are especially impactful in the Ingredient Marketing Program, offering industrial buyers, many of whom have never seen a global honey production operation, a deeper connection to its source.

Joe Sanroma states he would like to see the videos coming back to the US and is concerned that these are hurting domestic honey sales.

Michelle Poulk, everyone needs to keep an open mind in regard to honey as a whole but agrees that we do need to showcase domestic producers also.

Lombard, the first 5 years of videos were all of domestic honey producers.

Matt Halbgewachs, do we know the quantity of return, do we know the stats of the videos?

Lombard, the goal is to help change minds that eating imported honey is bad, showcasing that all honey is produced the same and the natural aspects. Results show that it is working.

MindyRyan, the point of view needs to be consistent.

Joe Sanroma, maybe show the different floral sources.

Tom Sargeantson, domestic videos seem like a natural thing to do.

Stacy Drab, the videos are amazing, what consumers purchase is based on perception, what if you collaborate a domestic beekeeper with a foreign beekeeper, and how it is a universal process, have them show comradery instead of against each other.

Joe Sanroma, if the consumer wants US honey, why are we going to support imports? We (domestic) need more support, and we can produce more. The videos are creating a divide. We need more balance.

Michelle Poulk, the US can't pick up the amount that is imported.

Stacy Drab, it isn't about domestic vs. imports, it is about reality and clarifying and changing perceptions, the US cannot provide enough honey to meet the demand. We need to quit villainizing.

Lombard, the National Honey Board is here to support you, all of you.

Matt Halbgewachs, this has been going on for 5 years and no one saw the videos, not until the videos about other countries were available or shown, and then there was a bad outlook on them. I say keep going with them.

Maren Martin, make a video about what US beekeepers need to be able to produce more honey.

MindyRyan, the videos are a passion project, should we form a committee to have additional discussion?

ACTION ITEM VIII: TO CREATE A COMMITTEE to discuss Celebrating Beekeeping Videos

Motion by Maren Martin, seconded by Justin Livermore and motion carries.

Dan Winter, reach out to the board if you have ideas you want to share.

Barry, yes, we are always looking for ideas.

Mindy Ryan, please advocate for the Honey Board within your other organizations and get the NHB in time slots at your other meetings.

Lombard, we will be sure to get all of the materials from the meeting to everyone.

Upcoming Meetings

- Spring 2025: April 24th & 25th San Diego, CA
- Fall 2025: October 23rd & 24th Denver CO

ACTION ITEM IX: TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion by Bjorn Anderson, seconded by Dan Winter to adjourn the meeting and passed to accept.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:52am