

ARTISANAL MEAD (5 Gallons)

Official NORTHERN BREWER Instructional Document

Based on Ames Farm's amazing honey, Northern Brewer Artisanal Mead Kits are simple, uncluttered traditional meads designed to let the honey shine through. Because the floral sources and composition of Ames Farm honey will change with the season and years, and are dependent on variables like hive placement and weather, every batch of these kits will be unique.

HYDROMEL SEMI-SWEET MEAD

This off-dry to semi-sweet, low-gravity "table mead" is excellent with a light sparkle and can be ready to package and drink much sooner than strong meads.

O.G.: 1.038-1.040 READY: 2 MONTHS

2 weeks primary, 1 month secondary,
2 weeks bottle conditioning

KIT INVENTORY:

- 5.8 lbs Ames Farm Artisanal Minnesota Honey.
- 4 packets yeast nutrient.
- Wyeast 4184 Sweet Mead Yeast.

STANDARD DRY MEAD

Fermented to completion, dry mead is delicate and more subtle than medium or sack mead. Becomes champagne-like if you carbonate it. Excellent as an aperitif.

O.G.: 1.080-1.083 READY: 3 MONTHS

2 weeks primary, 2 months secondary,
2 weeks bottle conditioning

KIT INVENTORY:

- 12 lbs Ames Farm Artisanal Minnesota Honey.
- 4 packets yeast nutrient.
- Wyeast 4021 Champagne Yeast.

STANDARD SEMI-SWEET MEAD

With a more pronounced aroma and greater mouthfeel than dry mead but with lower residual sugar than a true sweet mead, medium or semi-sweet mead has a very justified broad appeal.

O.G.: 1.080-1.083 READY: 3 MONTHS

2 weeks primary, 2 months secondary,
2 weeks bottle conditioning

KIT INVENTORY:

- 12 lbs Ames Farm Artisanal Minnesota Honey.
- 4 packets yeast nutrient.
- Wyeast 4783 Rudesheimer Yeast.

SACK SWEET MEAD

A very strong beverage, sack is the mead equivalent of a late-harvest icewine or a barley wine. A viscous and intense sipping experience.

O.G.: 1.120-1.123 READY: 4 MONTHS

2 weeks primary, 3 months secondary,
2 weeks bottle conditioning

KIT INVENTORY:

- 17.8 lbs Ames Farm Artisanal Minnesota Honey.
- 4 packets yeast nutrient.
- Wyeast 4184 Sweet Mead Yeast.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN ...

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Homebrewing starter kit for brewing 5 gallon batches.
- Approximately two cases of either 12 ounce or 22 ounce pry-off style beer bottles OR approximately 24 750 ml wine bottles with corks.

UNPACK THE KIT

- Refrigerate the yeast upon arrival. Locate the Kit Inventory (above) - this is the recipe for your mead, so keep it handy.
- Doublecheck the contents vs. the Kit.
- Inventory Contact us immediately if you have any questions or concerns!

PROCEDURE

A FEW DAYS BEFORE BREWING DAY

1. Remove the yeast from the refrigerator, and "smack" as shown on the back of the yeast package. Leave it in a warm place (70-80° F) to incubate until the pack begins to inflate. Allow at least 3 hours for inflation; some packs may take up to several days to show inflation. Do not brew with inactive yeast - we can replace the yeast, but not a batch that fails to ferment properly.

ON BREWING DAY

2. Sanitize the fermenting equipment - fermenter, lid or stopper, fermentation lock, funnel, etc - along with the yeast pack and a pair of scissors.
3. Fill a sink or cooler with hot tap water and soak honey container(s) to make the honey easier to pour. If your honey is crystallized, don't worry - all raw and natural honey crystallizes over time, especially in colder temperatures. Soaking the honey container in hot water will turn it back into liquid form.
4. Fill fermenter with 3 gallons of room temperature water.
5. Add the contents of ONE sachet of Mead Nutrient Blend to the water in the fermenter and stir before honey is added.
6. Boil 0.75 gallons of water.
7. While water is coming to a boil, pour honey into the fermenter along with the room-temp water and nutrient.
8. Take the boiled water and carefully pour a small amount into each empty honey container.
9. Replace covers and shake to dissolve remaining honey (Caution: pressure will build in containers! Open carefully!)
10. Pour the warm water and dissolved honey into the fermenter. Top up with additional water as needed to achieve a volume of 5 gallons. The mixture is now called the must.

11. Stir the must until all honey is dissolved and well mixed. This may take 5 to 15 minutes, possibly longer.

12. Using the sanitized scissors, carefully cut open the yeast pack and pour the slurry into the fermenter.

13. Seal fermenter with a sanitized airlock and locate fermenter in an area that is 65 to 70 deg F.

14. Fermentation should start within 24 hours.

BEYOND BREWING DAY - FIRST ONE TO TWO WEEKS

15. Add the remaining nutrient sachets following the schedule below. Remember to carefully sanitize all equipment used to stir the must for each nutrient addition. Warning: adding nutrient and stirring may cause the mead to foam over. Before each nutrient addition you should briefly stir the mead to release residual CO₂; this will help prevent foaming. Add one sachet of Mead Nutrient Blend 24 hours after yeast pitch and stir. Add one sachet of Mead Nutrient Blend 48 hours after yeast pitch and stir. Add one sachet of Mead Nutrient Blend 72 hours after yeast pitch and stir.

BEYOND BREWING DAY - SECONDARY FERMENTATION

16. When fermentation stops and the specific gravity as measured by a hydrometer is stable (has not changed over the course of two days), carefully siphon the mead into a sanitized five gallon secondary fermenter. Leave as much sediment as possible in the primary fermenter.

17. Let the mead clarify in the secondary fermenter for the time recommended by your kit. You may wish to add a fining agent such as isinglass to facilitate clearing, and/or potassium sorbate to prevent further fermentation.

BOTTLING DAY

18. If the mead is to be bottled, we recommend that it be a still mead (no carbonation). Sanitize siphoning and bottling equipment and bottles. Carefully siphon the mead to a bottling bucket and fill the bottles.

19. If you wish to make a sparkling mead (carbonated), we recommend racking the mead into a sanitized soda keg and force-carbonating with CO₂ gas.

20. Bottles may be consumed 2 weeks after bottling or kept and aged for 6 months or more to achieve superior flavor.