

SEVEN ACRES HONEY

Our tiny apiary (four hives) is situated in the small orchard of our house on the edge of the Quantock Hills in West Somerset with views across the Bristol Channel to Wales. It is a remote spot, and the hives have to be protected by a deer-proof and badger-proof fence.

Our operation is very small-scale and so our rates of production are extremely variable. The amount of honey our “girls” produce is weather-dependent as they can't fly in the rain. The flavour of the honey is created by the forage they find within roughly a three-mile radius of the hives. So, for example, dandelion, apple blossom and rape in the spring will create a light, floral honey; whereas, blackberry, ivy and heather on the hills later in the summer will produce a darker honey with deeper, more complex flavours. We often blend honey from different seasons to produce a more balanced flavour.

We usually get a crop in late spring and one in summer and, if we're lucky, we'll get some heather honey comb in August. After we have extracted, we heat the honey very gently at a low temperature (so as not to damage its make-up or flavour). We do this so we can filter it. Then we bottle it. That's it.