

A close-up photograph of a piece of honeycomb dripping with golden honey. The honey is falling into a glass that is already partially filled with honey. The background is a soft, light blue gradient.

strategic plan

National Honey Board
November 2022

STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION, VISION, PURPOSE & VALUES

- **MISSION:** Drive consumption of honey and demonstrate its importance to the planet.
- **VISION:** Inspire a passion for honey, nature's finest food, and an appreciation for the honey bees that make honey, and our entire food system, possible.
- **PURPOSE:** National Honey Board is the "hive" that unifies the industry to promote the natural wholesomeness of honey.
- **WE VALUE:**
 - Collaboration:** bringing the industry together for the common good
 - Honesty:** being authentic, fair and honest in all our dealings
 - Innovation:** forward thinking, yet purposeful to ensure long-term growth
 - Transparency:** using a research- and fact-based approach in all communications
 - Respect:** balancing the needs of all for the greater good
 - Integrity:** upholding strong moral principles

GOALS

- Increase honey demand with consumers, foodservice and ingredient channels
- Build an undeniable linkage between consuming honey, supporting beekeepers and bees and an abundant food supply
- Serve as the authoritative, go-to resource for all things honey
- Unify the industry and facilitate communication

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FILTERS

The following filters will aid the National Honey Board in prioritizing programs to ensure they meet the stated mission, vision and purpose. Further, these filters will allow the National Honey Board to allocate their resources in the most effective way possible and to add transparency to the decision-making process.

- Does it create long-term demand for honey?
- Does it enhance the education and understanding of honey?
- Does it showcase the value of honey?
- Does it enhance the pure and natural image of honey?
- Does it benefit all members of the honey community?
- Does it deliver measurable impact?



*strategic priorities***MARKETING****OBJECTIVES**

- Inspire usage and preference of honey with consumers, foodservice and ingredient channels
- Build an undeniable linkage between consuming honey, supporting beekeepers and bees and an abundant food supply
- Promote the overall sustainability of honey
- Reinforce the health halo of honey

POINT OF VIEW**Promote Honey's Natural Purity**

There are many key trends occurring among Americans that honey is poised to take advantage of. First and foremost, Americans are looking to incorporate more wholesome and natural foods into their diets. This often manifests in looking for simple, "cleaner" ingredient labels and an avoidance of processed foods with additives. Honey is most appreciated for its natural purity. It is viewed as being one of the most natural foods and aligns with this growing desire for pure, wholesome foods. It is critical to protect the purity of honey and the reputation of global honey.

Honey Is Good for the Planet

Americans are increasingly concerned about the sustainability impact of their choices, the origins of their food and how it is grown. There is a significant opportunity to communicate the positive impact of honey and the honey industry on the environment. One key aspect of this is the increased education on the role of pollinators in agriculture. Honey is unquestionably linked to bees, and there is growing concern for the health of bees.

However, research shows that many Americans are unsure if consuming honey is good or bad for the health of bees. The emergence of "bee-free" honey products is further threatening this connection, as these products are claiming that honey consumption is bad for bees. Therefore, it is critical to educate Americans on why honey consumption is good for bee health and the overall ecosystem.

Honey Is Good for You

While sustainability and environmental impact is a key concern, consumers still care most about how what they eat impacts their health. Americans are broadening their definition of health and wellness, with a holistic view that includes physical, mental and emotional health. Honey has a healthy halo, and it is believed to be healthier than standard "processed" sweeteners. Further, honey bee pollination makes many healthy foods possible. It will be important to reinforce this health halo with tangible benefits of honey and further showcase the value of honey.

Drive Consumer Demand with a Surround-Sound Approach

Research data shows the majority of honey volume is driven at the consumer level, so reaching consumers directly with these honey messages is paramount. Consumer target audiences are identified to focus efforts on the group with the strongest potential to increase honey consumption. Further, as younger generations are increasingly food involved, there is an opportunity to expand programs to educate the next generation on the unique benefits of honey.

Consumer marketing can be accomplished through direct-to-consumer programs or working with retailers to bolster point-of-sale presence for honey. In addition, Americans are eating out of the home at increasing rates. They look to these dining experiences for new ideas and inspiration. Therefore, the influence of foodservice can help drive new usage for honey. CPG manufacturers are seeking to develop more wholesome products with a cleaner ingredient level, and positioning honey as a solution will be a key driver to growth.

Protect the Reputation of Honey

Lastly, as Americans expand their understanding of food and agriculture, more food growing processes are being scrutinized. Despite the natural, pure equities of honey, it is not sheltered from this growing scrutiny on the food system. Therefore, it will be important to proactively address and mitigate issues that could be harmful for the industry.

STRATEGIES

- Educate on the connection of honey consumption to bee health and the overall food system
- Reinforce the health halo of honey through nutritional benefits
- Communicate the sustainability initiatives of the honey industry
- Inspire usage through the versatility of honey
- Protect the reputation of honey through proactive issues management

PROGRAMS

- Consumer
- Retail
- Ingredient
- Foodservice
- Issues Management

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

(Consider making these matrix goals, e.g., drive use of honey by consumers X times per week)

- Honey sweetener preference (Consumer AAU)
- Honey usage (Consumer AAU)
- Honey health perceptions (Consumer AAU)
- Eating honey saves bees (Consumer AAU)
- Per capita consumption (retail sales data; e.g., Nielsen)
- Honey restaurant menu items (in key categories and key operators)
- Honey new product introductions (new product introduction tracking)



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INDUSTRY OUTREACH



OBJECTIVES

- Drive industry engagement and involvement with the National Honey Board
- Facilitate industry-wide communication and foster collaboration among stakeholders
- Drive cohesion and consistency across the industry in outward-facing messages and guidelines

POINT OF VIEW

Unify the Industry

The honey community is made up of a variety of stakeholders and members, all with varying backgrounds, areas of focus and perspectives. Because of these differing perspectives, the industry is more fragmented than ever. The National Honey Board holds a critically important position to unify the industry and serve as the authoritative voice for honey in the U.S.

Foster Industry Engagement

For the National Honey Board to serve as the credible authority in the industry, it is critical to build engagement among all industry members. Many industry stakeholders aren't involved with the Board's initiatives and programs, and thus aren't sure of the value it delivers. There is an opportunity to engage newer and under-represented members of the industry.

Provide Tools & Resources

In order to foster collaboration and unification among the entire honey community, the National Honey Board should provide up-to-date,

relevant and actionable tools and resources for industry use. These tools will help shape industry best practices and amplify consistent messaging platforms.

The Board should also identify opportunities to foster collaboration among the industry members. There is an opportunity to develop one cohesive story that the whole industry stands behind. The National Honey Board will play a critical role in developing that story and disseminating it to the entire industry. This will ultimately ensure that the industry is working as a whole to drive increased consumption of honey.

STRATEGIES

- Provide timely updates and actionable resources on National Honey Board initiatives
- Expand reach to all segments of the honey community
- Develop toolkits and guidelines to drive best practices and leverage the industry's voice with consumers and stakeholders
- Identify key opportunities to bring industry members together

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Board meeting involvement (attendance numbers)
- Distribution of Board updates (subscriptions)
- Awareness of Board programs (annual survey)

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RESEARCH

OBJECTIVES

- Provide the industry with market research on the latest honey consumption trends
- Utilize research to evaluate program effectiveness and to guide key program decisions
- Develop a body of nutritional evidence to support more honey health messages
- Lead scientific studies to aid in improved bee health

POINT OF VIEW

A Fact-Based Approach

One of the key values of the National Honey Board is transparency and using a research- and fact-based approach in all programs. Further, the National Honey Board seeks to be the credible, authoritative voice in the industry. To deliver on both of these, a strong research foundation is necessary. This foundation is developed through primary research, secondary research and forging strategic alliances.

Latest Consumer Insights

The National Honey Board delivers value to the industry by staying up to date on all the newest honey consumption trends. This also allows a forward-looking, innovative approach to all programs. Primary and secondary market research is a key way to derive new insights on the evolving honey marketplace. This research can also be used as compelling marketing information to showcase the benefits of honey to retailers, foodservice and ingredient manufacturers.

Measure Program Effectiveness

Transparency is another key value of the National Honey Board, and measuring program effectiveness and making this available to industry members is a key way to demonstrate the value of the organization.

Primary research studies are critical in measuring and tracking program effectiveness on a

consistent basis. This data also provides the opportunity to optimize programs and course correct where necessary.

Develop Nutrition Research

As marketing programs seek to capitalize on the health halo of honey, it is critical to have health claims that are supported by a body of nutrition science. Through the ongoing development and implementation of the nutrition research pipeline, the industry will be able to provide fact-based information about the health benefits of honey. Thus reinforcing its current health halo, helping to demonstrate honey's value and further driving consumption.

Support Production Research

The National Honey Board is committed to improving the health of bees, and many organizations look to the Board for an objective understanding on bee health and the future outlook. Funding ongoing scientific studies will help improve this understanding and position the Board as an authoritative voice in bee health. The Board is also committed to investing in production research to help industry members continually enhance their practices. Having a comprehensive production research program will accomplish both objectives.

STRATEGIES

- Develop an annual research plan for program evaluation and insights on honey trends
- Implement nutrition research studies based on existing research pipeline
- Partner with scientific research experts for specialized bee health and production research

PROGRAMS

- Market Research
- Nutrition Research
- Production/bee Research