

BJCP Mead Exam

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Mead Exam Format

- 2 hour written section (8 questions)
- 45 minute tasting section (3 meads)
- Mead Judge program, Judging procedures/ethics
- Balance and Style Attributes question
- Honey question (varietal mead styles)
- Ingredient question (non-varietal styles)
- Identify characteristics, troubleshoot faults
- Process Control question
- Scenario-based troubleshooting question

Q1-1: Mead Judge Program

- 10 Yes-No and Short Answer questions
 - What is the **Mead Judge** designation called for a person who has previously taken the BJCP Beer Judge Exam?
 - What is the **Mead Judge** designation called for a person who hasn't previously taken the BJCP Beer Judge Exam?
 - Is a person passing the Mead Judge Exam a full BJCP member?
 - What are the requirements for becoming a BJCP **Mead Judge**?
 - Minimum exam score
 - Experience points
 - Can an existing BJCP member increase in rank using the score from a BJCP Mead Judge Exam?
 - What type of credit does an existing BJCP member earn by passing the BJCP Mead Judge Exam?
 - Can someone who has passed the BJCP Mead Judge Exam advance in rank by earning experience points?
 - Name two reasons how a person passing the BJCP Mead Judge Exam can identify themselves at a BJCP-sanctioned competition.

Q1-1: Mead Judge Program

■ A:

- “Mead Judge” is a rank (non-BJCP judges)
- “Mead Judge” is an endorsement (BJCP judges)
- No prereqs for rank
- Pass the Mead Judge exam (60 or higher)
- No experience points required
- Full BJCP member
- Can check “Mead Judge” box on scoresheet
- Can wear “Mead Judge” pin
- Can’t advance in rank
- Can’t use exam as basis to advance in beer rank
- Passing the exam gives judges CEP credit

Q2-1: Balance and Styles

- Discuss components that must balance in a mead, and how they vary in different mead styles and in the presence of different ingredients
- Discuss differences in mead styles (strength, sweetness, adjuncts)
- Q: "Identify at least three major components that contribute to a properly balanced mead. Discuss how the components of balance are controlled and adjusted in both the fermentation process and the aging process."

Q2-1: Balance

■ A:

- Acidity, sweetness, tannin, alcohol, honey flavor
- How to adjust each in recipe formulation
- How to adjust each after fermentation
- Natural adjustments, additives, process control

Q2-2: Honey

- Describe three honeys taken from master list of 21 honeys most often used in competitions
- Q: "Describe the varietal character imparted by the following honey varieties when fermented in a mead: Buckwheat, Sage Blossom, Palmetto. Consider flavor, aroma, color and mouthfeel contributions, and the degree of distinctiveness, uniqueness or intensity of each honey. In what mead styles might each of these honeys be appropriate or inappropriate, and why?"

Q2-2: Honey

■ A:

- Identify most important aspects of each honey, including overall impression
 - Color, flavor, aroma
 - How intense?
 - How readily identifiable are they?
 - Do they work better in certain styles?

Q2-3: Ingredients

- Apple, Grape, Fruit, Spices, Malt meads
- Q: "What term is given to a mead made with fruit? Describe the character imparted by the following fruit when fermented in a mead: Blackberry, Lime, Mango. Consider flavor, aroma, color, and mouthfeel contributions, and degree of distinctiveness, uniqueness or prominence of each fruit. Is the fermented fruit flavor different from the raw fruit flavor?"

Q2-3: Ingredients

■ A:

- Identify name of mead styles
- Describe characteristics of raw ingredients
- Discuss what character the ingredients add to mead
 - Color, Flavor, Aroma
 - Is it different when fermented?
- How does the ingredient affect balance?

Q2-4: Troubleshooting

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- Similar to question on beer exam
- Three characteristics or faults taken from a list of 18
- Q: "Describe and discuss the following mead characteristics: Moldy, Fruitiness, Waxy. How are they perceived? What causes them and how are they controlled or avoided? Are they ever appropriate?"

Q2-4: Troubleshooting

■ A:

- Identify chemical/name of fault
- Do you perceive it in flavor, aroma, appearance, and/or mouthfeel?
- Describe its character
- How does it occur? How is it avoided or controlled?
- Is it ever desirable? In what styles or occasions?

Q2-5: Process Control

- Process control (balance, aging, fermentation)
- Q: "List and briefly discuss techniques a mead maker can employ to achieve the following objectives: (a) a healthy fermentation, (b) proper clarity, (c) mead stability. For full credit, identify three techniques for each of the three listed objectives."

Q2-5: Process Control

■ Process

- How does what you do change the final product?
- Pre-fermentation and post-fermentation
- Ingredient choice, process control, adjustment

Q2-6: Troubleshooting Scenario

- Practical situation that might occur in judging
- Q: "You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet still traditional mead. It is moderately cloudy, and has a taste of raw honey. It seems sweet and has a low alcohol level for style. There are no other noticeable flaws.

What is your assessment of this mead, and what feedback would you give in a competition setting? Support your position by discussing your reasoning."

Q2-6: Troubleshooting Scenario

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■ A:

- Try to identify root cause
- Is it a fault or not?
- Be sure to identify what you think is wrong and what leads you to that conclusion
- For the identified fault, talk about advice you might give
- Think about this occurring during judging; what would you put on a scoresheet?