MEAD EXCELLENCE

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Londonderry NH
My Background

• Started home-brewing in 1995 (beer/mead/cider)
• Life time member of the AHA
• Founded Moonlight Meadery in 2007
• Production Started in May 2010
• Left my “day job” on July 7 2010.
• Expect to sell 100,000 bottles this year.
Meads

- Semi-Sweet – Strawberry Rhubarb
- Semi-Sweet – Blueberry, Maple aged in Utopian barrel
- Sweet – Black Currant & Apple
Mead – What is it?

• Fermented Honey
  – Must=Mead as Wort=Beer

• Styles
  – Standard
  – Fruit Mead
    • Cyser -Apples
    • Pyment
  – Metheglin
    • Ginger, vanilla, cinnamon, etc.
  – Braggot

• Residual Sugar
  – Dry = 0.99-1.010
  – Semi-Sweet=1.010-1.025
  – Sweet = > 1.025

• Strength
  – Hydromel = 3.5%-7.5% (1.035-1.080)
  – Standard = 7.5%-14% (1.080-1.120)
  – Sack = >14% (>1.120)

• Carbonation
  – Still
  – Petillant (lightly carbonated)
  – Sparkling (highly carbonated)
What is Mead Excellence?

I don’t know…

It could be any of the following, or all of the above

– To consistently win medals?
– To impress others?
– To enjoy your own meads?
– To teach others?
– Create new and unique meads?
What’s it Take?

• Understanding the basics
• Develop a strong sense of what works
• Passion
• Think first, make second
• Know when to ignore, and listen to feedback
• Learn from others
• Makes LOTS of mead
Excellent Mead Requires

- Sanitation
- Excellent Ingredients
  - honey, water, fruit, spices, yeast
- Rehydrate Dry Yeast
- Staggered Yeast Nutrients
- Balance
- Practice
- Fermentation Management
Easy as “Kurt’s Apple” Pie

• Making mead is easy
• I never boil or heat needed like in brewing beer.
• Ferment at a low temp, 62° F
• Sanitation, Sanitation, Sanitation
• Very enjoyable in as little as 3 months
  – Desire – won Best of Show at 2009 NERHBC
Equipment Needed

• Fermenter (plastic bucket/carboy with air lock)
• Hydrometer and cylinder
• Racking cane and hose
• Mixing spoon, or mixing wand for drill.
• Measuring instruments (scale, spoons, etc.)
Basic Recipe

• 1 part honey to 3 parts water (no chlorine or off flavors).
• Fermaid-K – nutrient.
• Diammonium phosphate – nutrient.
• GoFerm – yeast hydration nutrient.
• Yeast – 71B-1122 (Narbonne)
Rehydrate dry yeast

1. Suspend 0.2 oz Go-Ferm in 3/10th of a gallon of 110°F clean, chlorine free water.

2. Once rehydration nutrient solution has dropped to 104°F add 1 gram dried active yeast, gently stir to break up any clumps. Let stand for 15 minutes and stir gently again.

3. Slowly (over 5 minutes) combine equal parts must to be fermented with yeast suspension.
About Honey

- Primary fermentable, provides character.
- Good choices for traditional meads:
  - Orange, Tupelo, Almond, Cranberry, Wildflower
- Never boil, if you need heat don’t go above 100° F
- A gallon of honey weighs ~12lbs
- Honey Specific gravity = 1.41 to 1.45
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF HONEY</th>
<th>Distinguishing Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acacia</td>
<td>Pale yellow in color, delicate flavor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alfalfa</td>
<td>Light amber in color, mild flavor and aroma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basswood</td>
<td>Water-white in color, strong “biting” flavor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckwheat</td>
<td>Dark amber, distinctive flavor, a little goes a long way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blueberry</td>
<td>Light amber in color, distinct fruity flavor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clover</td>
<td>Color varies from water-white to amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucalyptus</td>
<td>Generally strong flavor with a slight menthol notes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Heavy bodied, bittersweet, aromatic flavor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orange Blossom</td>
<td>Mild, flavor reminiscent of the sent of citrus blossoms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sage</td>
<td>Water white in color, mild flavor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safflower</td>
<td>Slight greenish cast in the color, mild flavor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sourwood</td>
<td>Mild flavor, amber in color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tupelo</td>
<td>Mild, distinctive flavor, very slow to crystallize.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Yeast

- Lots of choices, they all will make mead
- Personal favorite L71B, second L47
- Know your yeast requirements (temp, nutrients).
- 1 g per gallon for all my meads
- Control fermentation temp.
- It will consume unblended honey about an 1/8” per day.
- Oxygen requirements
Fermenting the Must

– Making yeast happy, Honey doesn’t have a lot of the nutrients to ferment well
– Adding Yeast Nutrient
– De-Gas your mead.
  • Creates a still mead
  • Releases CO2 (Poison to yeast)
  • Oxygenates Must
After fermentation slows down.

- Stop degassing
- Rack to Secondary
  - Add SO2, 50ppm
- Rack to Tertiary
  - Add Clarifying agent
    - Bentonite
    - Gelatin
    - Filter
    - Time+Cold
Bottling

– If the mead is nice and clear, it is time to bottle.
– Clear bottles OK!
  • Mead can be very Pretty
  • So can the bottles
– Most likely have some sediment unless filtered
– Let it age! 6 months to 10 years, just like wine
– Store it in a cool, dark place, 55 deg F if possible
Relax have and have a mead

- What have I learned about Mead Excellence?
  - Relax
  - Have fun
  - Make LOTS of mead
Where to find Moonlight Meadery

• Distribution (currently)
  – NH, ME, VT, RI, MA, CA, CT

• Shipping
  – AK, FL, ID, LA, MN, MO,
  – NE, NV, NM, ND, OH, OR, VA, DC, WV, WY
Contact Info

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• All I ask is that you ask for our meads…
  Thank you!