



# BEER JUDGE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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## 1997 MEAD GUIDELINES

The following mead guidelines are an expanded version of the mead guidelines included within the 1997 BJCP Style Guidelines. These more verbose guidelines are intended to provide the mead brewer and judge with a reference for the most commonly crafted meads. The BJCP has established a committee to review and refine these style guidelines. Your comments are welcomed.

### 23. TRADITIONAL MEAD

*A mead made primarily from honey, water and yeast. Honey should be expressed in aroma and flavor. Additives of any type are allowed at sub-threshold levels. The mead should have a neutral acidity-sweetness-tannin balance.*

#### A. Standard Traditional Mead

*Uses generic honey or a blend of honeys.*

#### B. Varietal Honey Traditional Mead -

*Made from honey from a particular flower source (clover and wildflower honey are not acceptable in this category). The brewer must name the varietal honey. Examples include buckwheat, orange blossom, star thistle, fireweed, snowberry, raspberry blossom, mesquite, heather, alfalfa, tupelo, etc. The mead should showcase the distinctive taste of the particular varietal honey.*

### 24. MELOMEL

*A mead made with fruit. The fruit may be expressed in the aroma, the taste and the color of the mead in widely varying degrees. Honey should be expressed in aroma and flavor. There should be a appealing but not necessarily equal balance between the honey and the fruit character in both the aroma and taste*

#### A. Cyser (Apple)

*Should have distinct apple character in aroma and taste. Color should be straw to golden.*

#### B. Pymment (Grape)

*May be either straw to golden color or have a pink to purple cast. The mead should have a definite grape wine character, but should also have a balanced honey character. Grassy white wine character or buttery (diacetyl) chardonnay character is appropriate in pymment (or hippocras) only.*

#### C. Raspberry

*Should have a distinct and intense raspberry flavor. Raspberry tartness and tannin should be balanced by honey sweetness, though the finish may be dry or sweet. Honey flavor and aroma should still come through. The mead should have a deep red-purple color.*

#### D. Cherry Melomel

*Should have a deep reddish brown color. Cherry character may be subtle or very strong depending on variety of cherries used and may partially mask the honey character. Some almond character from the cherry pits is okay and can be a plus. This melomel may range from a light cherry hydromel to a heavy, sherry-like after dinner drink. Some oxidation may be appropriate to give this mead a sherry or port character.*

#### E. Plum Melomel

*Has many similarities to cherry melomel. Color ranges from pale to a deep purple or reddish brown. Plum character should be*

*apparent in both the aroma and taste, balanced with the honey character. Some oxidation may be appropriate to give this mead a sherry or port character.*

#### F. Strawberry Melomel

*Should have fresh strawberry aroma. May not have any discernible strawberry color. Strawberry taste may be delicate. Good examples will have a definite strawberry character in the aroma and taste, but will probably be delicate meads in order to be balanced.*

#### G. Blueberry Melomel

*May not have any discernible blueberry color. Blueberry taste may be delicate. Good examples will have a definite blueberry character in the aroma and taste, but will probably be delicate meads in order to be balanced.*

#### H. Berry Melomel

*May be Boysenberry, Marion Berry, Morat (Mulberry), Blackberry, Cranberry, Elderberry or others. Most berry melomels will have a distinct reddish to purple color. Berry flavor and aroma should be present and balance with honey character. Berry melomels have a tendency to be overly tannic; a good tannin-sweetness balance is desired.*

#### I. Peach Melomel

*May have a fresh peach taste or add a more subtle fruitiness. Instead of having a fruit-honey balance, peach melomels are unique in that the peach taste blends with the honey taste, giving a whole greater than the sum of the parts. Slight cloying quality okay. Color should be a pinkish golden.*

#### J. Apricot Melomel

*Should have a pink-orange tint. Apricot taste and aroma may be strong, with an accompanying strong honey character. The acid-sweetness balance in this mead is particularly hard to attain, as apricots tend to be very acidic.*

#### K. Citrus Melomel

*May be more acidic (tarter) than other melomels, but should still have a good acid/sweet balance. May be made with orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit, tangerine or other citrus fruits. Little or no expression of fruit in the color. Citrus character may be hard to discern unless compared to a traditional mead. Honey character will probably dominate, but citrus should still come through.*

#### L. Tropical Fruit Melomel

*May include papaya, mango, kiwi, guava, pomegranate or other tropical fruits. Should express fruit character, but may be difficult to judge due to less familiarity with the fruit tastes. Color may be straw (kiwi) to orange golden (mango, papaya, guava) to purplish (pomegranate). Fruit may be expressed as an enhanced fruitiness blended with the honey flavor.*

#### M. Prickly Pear Mead

*Less ripe pears may give a deep golden color. A purple color fading to pink over time is normal for very ripe prickly pears.*

*Prickly pears lend a dry, dusty or powdery taste, overlaid on a sweet background. Honey should be prominent and accentuated by the prickly pear.*

#### **N. Other**

*Other fruits/combinations. See general melomel description.*

### **25. METHEGLIN**

*A mead made with spices or herbs. The spices should be expressed in the aroma and flavor of the mead, but usually won't appear in the color. There should be a pleasing but not necessarily equal honey-spice balance in the mead. Metheglins containing more than one spice should also have a good balance between the different spices, though stronger spices tend to dominate. Often a blend of spices may give a character greater than the sum of its parts.*

#### **A. Mulling Spice Metheglin**

*May contain Allspice, Cinnamon, Cloves, Ginger, Nutmeg, Citrus Rind, Mace or other mulling spices. Most metheglins in this subcategory will contain a blend of these spices. If several spices are used, spices should blend together. A common problem is overdoing the ginger, as it tends to dominate. Honey should be very noticeable and should blend well with these spices.*

#### **B. Beer Spice Metheglin**

*May contain Coriander, Cardamom, Curacao Orange Peel, Woodruff or other spices often associated with beers. Spices should be evident and balanced with honey character. May be reminiscent of a Wit Beer or Berliner Weisse. The mead will probably be light in order not to overwhelm the delicate spices.*

#### **C. Mellow Spice Metheglin**

*May contain Vanilla Bean, Chocolate, Anise, Maple Syrup, Sassafras Root or other mellow or rounded tasting spices. These spices all have smooth tastes, in contrast to the more piquant spices in the other subcategories. The flavor of the spices may blend with that of the honey more than be balanced with it. Acidity-sweetness balance is particularly important, as these metheglins will have a tendency to be cloying. Some cloying character is acceptable. Anise has a flavor similar to licorice.*

#### **D. Italian Spice Metheglin**

*May contain Oregano, Basil, Thyme, Bay Leaves, Sage, Rosemary, Garlic or other Italian spices. Think of this metheglin as an accompaniment for Italian food, enhancing and augmenting the tastes present in the meal. Mixtures of these spices may be more common than individual spice metheglins. The mead may be light to balance the honey and spice character, with the exception of garlic metheglins.*

#### **E. Flower Petal Metheglin**

*May be made from Rose Petals (Rhodomel), Dandelion Petals, Lavender Petals, Tea Blends (Earl Grey, Orange Pekoe, Bergamot, Chamomile, Jasmine, etc.), Heather Tips, Hop Cones (Miodomel), Honeysuckle Flowers, Elderberry Flowers or other flower petals. In most cases, these metheglins will be hydromels in order to showcase the fragile taste and aroma of the flower petals. Metheglins made with teas and hops will be the exception to this, and will be stronger in body. Honey character should be present, but will be light to balance the delicate flower character.*

#### **F. Peppery Metheglin**

*May contain White Pepper, Black Pepper, Mint, Spearmint, Peppermint, Lemon Grass, Curry Powder, Grains of Paradise, Juniper Berries, Spruce, Mustard Seed, Fennel, Turmeric, Fenugreek, Cumin or other peppery spices. These pungent spices provide a fitting counterpoint to the sweetness of the honey. Honey should be prominent but balanced with the spice character.*

#### **G. Chile Mead**

*(Capsimel, named for the spicy chemical capsaicin and the genus of chile plants, capsicum) May contain Jalapeno Peppers, New Mexico Green Chiles (Sandia, Espanola, Hatch, Numex Big Jim, Rio Grande), Red Chiles, Poblano Chiles, Mexican Pequin Pepper, Ancho Chiles, Chipotle Chiles, Tabasco Peppers, Cayenne Peppers, Anaheim Chiles, Serrano Peppers, Habanero Peppers, Cascabel Peppers, Thai Peppers or other chiles or peppers. The metheglin may vary widely in amount of heat. Always judge capsimels last in a flight. The taste of the chile should be evident as well as the heat. A strong sweetness and honey flavor will probably be necessary to balance the chile flavor. Chile character should also be present in the aroma.*

#### **H. Other**

*See general metheglin description.*

### **26. BRAGGOT**

*A mead made with malted barley or wheat (also spelled Bracket or Bragget). The majority of the fermentable sugars should come from honey (otherwise it is really more of a honey ale). A braggot should have good malt character in the aroma and flavor. Hop bitterness, flavor and aroma may be present, but are not required. There should be a good balance between the beer aspect and the mead aspect of a braggot, especially with regard to maltiness and bitterness vs. honey character.*

#### **A. Pale Braggot**

*Has a color in the light straw to golden range. Malt taste will be light and honey character will be light to balance.*

#### **B. Amber Braggot**

*Has a color in the golden to light brown range. The braggot will often contain crystal or caramel malt, which will have a residual sweetness that will blend with the honey aspects.*

#### **C. Dark Braggot**

*Derives its color from darker malts, such as chocolate malt, black patent malt and roasted barley. The tastes of the darker malts (roasted character or chocolate malt smoothness) should be present.*

### **27. MIXED CATEGORY MEAD**

*A mead that combines ingredients from two of the three previous categories. The mead should exhibit the character of all of the ingredients, and should show a good blending or balance between the various flavor elements.*

#### **A. Hippocras (Spiced Pyment)**

*A mead made with grapes and spices. Grassy white wine character or buttery chardonnay character is appropriate in hippocras (or pyment) only.*

#### **B. Apple Pie Mead (Cyser with Mulling Spices)**

*A mead made with apples and Allspice, Cinnamon, Cloves, Ginger, Nutmeg, Citrus Rind, Mace or other mulling spices.*

#### **C. Spiced Melomel or Fruited Metheglin**

*A mead made with fruit and spices.*

#### **D. Maltomel**

*A mead made with malt and fruit.*

#### **E. Malteglin**

*A mead made with malt and spices.*

#### **F. Other**

*See general mixed category description.*