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Stronger honey authenticity controls

The Global Honey Integrity Council (GHIC) calls on authorities, retailers, importers and laboratories to strengthen honey authenticity controls and define how credible adverse evidence leads to investigation and a documented product decision.
Consumers and honest producers depend on accurate descriptions and effective verification.

Japan offers a practical example. Since July 2024, its Honey Fair Trade Council has promoted foreign-amylase testing, supplemented by diastase activity testing in January 2025. A supermarket association subsequently encouraged retailers to obtain supplier test results. These are documented industry initiatives; the reviewed record does not establish a universal new government test for every Chinese honey shipment. [02] [04] [10]

Native-PAGE screening and LC-QTOF/MS confirmation can address the presence and identity of foreign amylase. Complementary evidence remains necessary: a negative targeted enzyme test cannot certify that honey contains no added syrup, and low activity can have several causes. Interpretation must account for botanical origin, processing, storage and the method's scope. [05] [06]

GHIC recommends three commitments

- **Control the evidence.** Use risk-based sampling linked to identifiable products and lots, preserve original reports and retained material, and connect laboratory findings with production and traceability records.
- **Resolve the analytical question.** Use suitable, validated methods and appropriate confirmation. When results differ, compare what each method measures and investigate the difference. Assess technically substantiated findings on their merits.
- **Record and implement the decision.** Name the responsible owner, document interim product status, investigate credible suspicions, and apply proportionate measures when non-compliance is established. Verify that corrective action addresses the finding.

GHIC supports a method-specific assessment of protein-based and complementary tests, with clear analytical targets, representative reference materials and demonstrated performance. Published research and collaborative studies provide a basis for technical evaluation; practical implementation requires appropriate sampling and explicit decision rules. [05] [08] [15]

Stronger safeguards must remain evidence-based. Findings about selected products cannot justify a general allegation against Chinese honey, a retailer or an entire supply chain. GHIC welcomes source-supported corrections, technical scrutiny and practical cooperation to improve controls.

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