

## Bee Maid Honey: Abuzz About Sage PFW

In 1950, a few beekeepers from the sunwashed prairies of western Canada agreed to collaborate and sell their honey under a single brand. Their cooperative grew and eventually joined with similar groups to become Bee Maid Honey Ltd., Canada's largest marketer of consumer-packaged honey. Bee Maid prides itself on selling the lightest and tastiest clover honey in the world.

Because Bee Maid pays its members based on the quality and color of their honey, careful tracking of incoming deliveries is essential. The cooperative must also monitor the origin of each jar of honey for quality control purposes. The original in-house system used for finances could not provide the detailed batch information necessary to meet changing business needs. Bee Maid hired an outside consultant to perform a business study, and, on the resulting recommendation, installed the Sage PFW ERP system.

### A Very "Sweet" System

Sage PFW now tracks virtually all operations at Bee Maid. When a member delivers honey to one of the plants, each barrel is labeled with the beekeeper's name, color, and moisture content of honey, number of pounds in the lot, and location in inventory. Results of purity tests are also recorded in the system. Soon raw material data will include bar-code information from within the Inventory Pro and Formulas modules.

Manufacturing scheduling is performed by Sage PFW for each of Bee Maid's brands, and for its private label products. The Formulas module in Sage PFW determines which raw materials to pull for production, depending on product. The system also identifies the components such as labels lids, bottles, and cases required to produce finished product.

### Customer

**Bee Maid Honey Ltd.**

### Industry

Manufacturing—Honey Processing

### Location

Winnipeg, Manitoba

### Number of Locations

Two

### Number of Employees

65

### System

**Sage PFW**

### Modules in Operation

Accounts Payable  
Accounts Receivable  
Bank Book  
Formulas  
Inventory Pro  
Material Requirements Planning  
Multi-Currency Manager  
Order Entry Pro  
Premier Ledger  
Production  
Purchasing Pro

### Challenge

In-house financial system lacked batching and sophisticated inventory capabilities, and did not permit the tracking necessary for modern quality control.

### Solution

Sage PFW with a complete suite of financial and processing modules, permitting accurate knowledge of product origination.

### Results

Monthly financial reports now available for greater cost control; flexibility in scheduling batch runs has reduced plant inventory levels while maximizing inventory levels of finished goods in warehouses and distribution centers.

## Swarm of Benefits

The system manages all financial functions, including general ledger, payables, receivables, purchase order, and currency conversion processing. “Sage PFW lets us do ad hoc financial reporting, something that was impossible before,” says Tim Banting, manager of information systems. “It allows us to divide districts into profit centers, where we record internal production, marketing, sales, and transportation costs by region. We now prepare sales reports every month instead of every quarter, with data available only three days after month end closing.

“Improved financial reporting is the greatest benefit we’ve received from Sage PFW,” Banting continues. “Our reports are now timelier and provide management with an important tool for making effective business decisions. The software has allowed us to expand, because we can now see exactly where costs can be trimmed, and where we have opportunities for growth. This has permitted far-range business planning for better strategic positioning.”

Stock levels and inventory costs are easy to determine with Sage PFW. “Using inventory control features, the system alerts us when items in stock are running low, so we will never run out of anything,” says Banting. “And since the costs of production are integrated with our financial system using direct links from the Inventory Pro, Production, and Premier Ledger modules, we know exactly what each run costs.”

“Without Sage PFW, we would not have the tools we need to manage effectively in today’s competitive environment.”

— Tim Banting  
Manager of Information Systems  
Bee Maid Honey Ltd.

## Proving Purity is Painless

Banting attributes Bee Maid’s success in particular markets to the new system. “Consumers are very particular about the quality of the food they eat and do not want contaminants or chemicals,” he notes. “White clover honey from Western Canada is prized around the world—and sells at premium prices—because of its color, texture, flavor, and reputation for purity. Sage PFW gives us very tight controls on quality through production formulas, and lets us track a specific jar of honey right back to the beekeeper.”

Banting links much of Bee Maid’s success to its fully integrated financial and manufacturing system. “Without Sage PFW, we would not have the tools we need to manage effectively in today’s competitive environment.”

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