

Purpose of the North Carolina Honey Queen Program

The North Carolina Honey Queen is to serve as a year-round educator, ambassador and promoter of the state's honey and beekeeping industry. She educates the public on the importance of honey bees, the uses of honey and honey products, and the beekeeping business through presentations at schools, fairs, festivals, conventions, and media interviews.

Qualifications

- Must be female, single, residing in North Carolina and between the ages of 18-24 (18 as of Jan 1, 2027 and no older than 24 Jan 1, 2027)
- Must have graduated from high school or high school equivalent
- Must have a valid driver license and reliable transportation
- Candidates do not need to come from a beekeeping background but must be willing to dedicate time to gain beekeeping and industry knowledge
- The North Carolina Honey Queen candidate may not currently hold or be applying for any other commodity or royalty title (i.e. Dairy Princess, Apple Queen, Watermelon Queen, Fair Queen, etc.)
- Qualified candidates may compete for North Carolina Honey Queen more than once if they continue to meet the guidelines
- The North Carolina Honey Queen Program Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any candidate

Candidate's Responsibilities

Applications for 2027 North Carolina Honey Queen will close on August 15, 2026. A panel of judges will review applications and announce the top three candidates by September 1, 2026.

Top three candidates will receive their notification via email, a schedule with Festival details, honey and bee educational resources and a topic/theme to create a 3-minute speech for the High Country Honey Festival. Candidates must accept by Noon on September 3, 2026 or an alternate will be identified. Lodging will be provided for candidates. Candidates will be responsible for travel costs.

Top three candidates are required to attend the High Country Honey Festival (October 2 & 3, 2026) and participate in the following events:

- Friday evening:
 - Festival kickoff dinner with a 3-minute speech
 - Interview with a panel of judges
- Saturday:
 - Coronation where you will give a 60-second introduction about yourself and share your 3-minute speech
 - The newly crowned Queen will be expected to attend additional events throughout the Festival

2027 North Carolina Honey Queen Festival Responsibilities:

Once crowned, you will be expected to interact with High Country Honey Festival attendees, help with the honey tasting bar and be present for photo and media opportunities. The festival will conclude with a post-festival party where you will give a short welcome speech and will be expected to stay for a portion of the event.

Once the Festival has concluded, we will connect you with our committee who will work with you to schedule training and plan for your upcoming year.

Queen Selection

Candidates will be evaluated on the following:

- Communication skills
- Public speaking ability
- Interview
- Knowledge of subject material (based on materials provided)
- Poise and confidence
- Professional appearance
- Any other criteria as outlined by the Queen Committee

Preparing for the Contest

Honey Queen candidates are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

All applicants will be notified September 1, 2026. If selected for the Top Three, additional details will follow via email.

Top three candidates will work with NC Honey Queen Committee to plan for travel and hotel accommodations during the High Country Honey Festival (October 2-3, 2026). The judging process will take place on Friday evening; every effort will be made to accommodate school.

Business professional attire (ex. brightly colored suits, professional dresses such as sheath or a-line, or blouse and skirt) is expected for Friday evening during the kickoff dinner, interview and coronation. Please keep the weather in mind when choosing your outfits.

Family and friends of the candidates are encouraged to attend the Festival. Festival tickets will be provided for candidates and their families. Family and friends will be required to purchase tickets for the kickoff dinner and after party, if they desire to attend. Tickets will be available for advanced purchase.

Coronation will happen Saturday at the Festival. Top three candidates will give a short introduction speech and then give their 3-minute presentation followed by the coronation.

The newly crowned North Carolina Honey Queen should plan to stay for the remainder of the Saturday Festival events.

A mandatory training weekend will be scheduled in October or November for the new Queen. Location will be determined by the NC Honey Queen Committee Chairperson. Lodging and travel expenses will be provided.

Candidates must bring a year calendar with them to the training and be prepared to share dates that they are not available for promotional events.

North Carolina Honey Queen Reign

The North Carolina Honey Queen reigns for one year – from the date she is crowned through the following High Country Honey Festival.

The Queen will make herself available throughout the year of her reign to travel across North Carolina, attending school events, fairs, farmers markets, beekeeping meetings and any other promotional events scheduled for them. **Please note, this is a yearlong commitment with significant travel.**

The North Carolina Honey Queen program will reimburse expenses for the NC Honey Queen approved events. Reimbursed expenses include mileage, lodging and meals. An expense report must be submitted to the NC Honey Queen Committee Chairperson due the last day of each month. A reimbursement check will be mailed.

In addition to the promotions scheduled throughout the year, it is mandatory that the Queen attend the following events:

- High Country Honey Festival (year of application and following year to crown new royalty)
- North Carolina State Beekeepers Meetings (Spring & Summer Conferences)
- Additional scheduled events and promotions including, but not limited to: Farmers Markets, State Fair, School Visits, Civic/Community Organization
- Compete at the American Beekeeping Federation

The North Carolina Honey Queen, will have an opportunity to represent North Carolina during the American Honey Queen contest in January following her reign (ex. 2027 NC Honey Queen will attend the 2028 January American Beekeeping Federation convention). The North Carolina Honey Queen Program will reimburse travel, hotel expenses and the application fee of an interested American Honey Queen Candidate.

Scholarship

In addition to mandatory events, the Queen must attend a minimum of 25 approved promotional events to receive the full **\$5,000** scholarship.