HONEYBEE

HB-PFSS Impartiality Policy

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This policy sets out how HoneyBee keeps decisions under the HoneyBee Pregnancy Food Safety Standard (HB-PFSS) free from commercial and personal influence. It applies to every assessment, to every person who performs one, and to HoneyBee as scheme owner.

1 · Commitment

- Assessment decisions are made on evidence against published criteria, and on nothing else.
- No fee, commercial relationship, expectation of future work, personal relationship or public pressure alters a finding or a decision.
- A manufacturer who does not meet the criteria is told so in writing, with the evidence, and is not certified.
- Where a conflict cannot be removed, it is declared rather than concealed.

2 · Scope

Document review, on-site audit, conformity decision, annual renewal, licensing of the HoneyBee mark, and the paid services offered alongside certification, including the Einordnung (classification of shelf-life documents under Reg. (EC) No 2073/2005).

3 · How decisions are kept impartial

- The criteria are published and have been reviewed by external specialists.
- The auditor investigates and recommends; the auditor never takes the decision. Every decision carries two signatures. During the pilot phase the second signature is given by the scheme owner, and a second qualified reviewer reads every report before the decision is taken.
- Every assessment is documented — evidence, findings, decision rationale — and the record is kept for five years.

4 · Fees

- Fees are earned on the work performed. No fee, credit or discount depends on the outcome of an assessment.
- Auditors are paid a fixed fee per engagement, independent of the outcome. The manufacturer never pays the auditor directly.
- If a manufacturer commissions an HB-PFSS assessment within six months of receiving an Einordnung report, the Einordnung fee is credited against the assessment fee, whatever the outcome of either. Nothing is ever credited against the licence fee for the mark.
- HoneyBee sells no products and earns nothing on what its licensees sell: no commission, no advertising, no paid visibility.

5 · No consultancy

- HoneyBee explains what a criterion requires and what evidence demonstrates it. It does not design a manufacturer's solution and then assess it.
- The Einordnung records what a manufacturer's existing documents show; it does not produce evidence. If the manufacturer later applies for certification, the Einordnung report is re-verified, not relied upon.

- An external microbiologist who appraises a manufacturer's evidence for HoneyBee takes no part in a decision on that manufacturer for 24 months.
- HoneyBee never recommends a named consultant, laboratory or training provider; on request it states the criteria a provider must meet.

6 · Conflicts of interest

- Every auditor declares conflicts before each engagement. Any commercial relationship with the manufacturer in the previous 24 months, and any family or close personal relationship with its staff, disqualifies.
- An auditor may not advise a manufacturer they have audited for 24 months after the audit, and audits the same site at most three years in a row.
- No gifts or hospitality beyond token value.

7 · Pressure, complaints and appeals

- Any attempt to influence a finding or a decision is recorded — including attempts from within HoneyBee.
- A manufacturer may appeal a finding or decision in writing within 30 calendar days, free of charge. Receipt is confirmed within five business days, and the appeal is never reviewed by the person whose finding is contested.

8 · Review

This policy is reviewed at least every six months and whenever a new service is introduced. Earlier versions are archived and available on request.

> The rules above apply to HoneyBee and to every person who assesses on its behalf, in the same terms.
> **Eva Vincenti**, Founder and Scheme Owner, HoneyBee · 6 November 2026

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