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# MEAD FAULT LIST

AHA/BJCP Sanctioned Competition Program  
See <http://www.bjcp.org/meadfaults.html>  
for a complete list

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Characteristic	Possible Solutions
<b>Acetic</b> Acetic acid, vinegar-like sourness	Check for infection. Check yeast strain. Check for oxidation sources (acetobacter is aerobic). Fruit additions.
<b>Acidic</b> Tart, sour, low pH	Acid additions, acid level in honey, use of fruit, infection.
<b>Alcoholic/Hot</b> Spicy, vinous, warming from Ethanol and higher alcohols	Lower fermentation temperature. Let mead age longer before consuming. Use less fermentables. Use a less attenuative yeast strain. Check yeast health. Check for possible infection.
<b>Cardboard</b> Stale, papery, wet cardboard	Check for oxygen being introduced into mead post-fermentation. Don't splash when racking/bottling. Check caps and/or keg seals for good fit. Purge bottles/kegs with CO2 prior to filling. Store mead cool. Drink mead when fresh.
<b>Chemical</b> Nutrient, chemical, vitamin	Use less nutrient additions, check water supply and chemical additions.
<b>Cloying</b> Overly sweet, flabby	Ferment more completely (check pH, nutrients, viable yeast, oxygen), use less honey, add balancing acid and/or tannin.
<b>Floral</b> Flower, blossom, perfume	Honey variety choice.
<b>Fruity/Estery</b> Fruity (strawberry, pear, banana, apple, grape, citrus)	Lower fermentation temperature. Try a cleaner yeast strain. Oxygenate must sufficiently. Reduce original gravity. Pitch a sufficient quantity of yeast (avoid yeast stress). Bottle condition and age mead longer at cellar temperatures to reduce esters. Try a different variety of honey.
<b>Metallic</b> Iron, copper, coins, blood	Check water for metallic ions. Reduce water salts. Reduce nutrient additions. Check equipment condition for rust. Make sure stainless steel equipment is properly passivated. Fully rinse sanitizer. Try using RO water and add salts as needed.
<b>Moldy</b> Stale, moldy, cellar-like, corked	Avoid oxidation (see Oxidized). Check sanitation. Check water for freshness and taste. Use fresh ingredients.
<b>Phenolic</b> Spicy, smoky, plastic, band-aid, medicinal	Check for infection. Check yeast strain and health.
<b>Sherry</b> Sherry, nutty, almond	Check for oxygen being introduced into mead post-fermentation. Don't splash when racking/bottling. Check caps and/or keg seals for good fit. Purge bottles/kegs with CO2 prior to filling. Store mead cool. Drink mead when fresh.
<b>Solvent</b> Hot burning on palate, harsh	Lower fermentation temperature. Pitch a sufficient quantity of healthy, active yeast. Check for infection. Try a different yeast strain.
<b>Sulfury</b> Rotten eggs, burning matches	Check for infection. Check water for excessive sulfates. Check yeast health. Check for yeast autolysis (mead left on yeast too long at warm temperatures). Try another yeast strain.
<b>Tannic</b> Astringent, mouth-puckering, lingering harshness, grape skin	Avoid use of raw spices, fruit pith and fruit skins. Tannin additions.
<b>Vegetal</b> Cooked, canned or rotten vegetables (cabbage, celery, onion, asparagus, parsnip)	Encourage a fast, vigorous fermentation (use a healthy, active starter to reduce lag time; this is often due to bacterial contamination of must before yeast becomes established). Check sanitation. Check for aged, stale, or old ingredients.
<b>Waxy</b> Wax-like, tallow, fatty	Try a different variety of honey. Filter honey. Avoid oxidation.
<b>Yeasty</b> Bready, sulfury, yeast-like	Use a more flocculent yeast strain. Allow yeast sufficient time to flocculate. Filter mead or use clarifying agents. Avoid carrying over as much yeast. Age the mead longer. Try another yeast strain.