



NEWS RELEASE

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West Virginia Honey Bee Colonies

Charleston, West Virginia - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in West Virginia as of January 1, 2023 totaled 5,000, up 9 percent from January 1, 2022. The number of colonies in the State on April 1, 2023 was 5,500. During 2022, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 4,600, 5,000, 8,000 and 7,500, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2023, were 600 colonies, or 10 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April-June 2023 was 350 colonies, or 5 percent. During the quarter of October-December 2022, colonies lost totaled 1,100, or 14 percent, the highest of any quarter surveyed in 2022. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April-June, with 260 colonies lost, or 3 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2023 were 40 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April-June 2023 was 1,400 colonies. During the quarter of April-June 2022, 2,400 colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2022. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the lowest number of colonies added was October-December 2022, with zero added colonies.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2023 were 40, or 1 percent. The number of colonies renovated during the quarter of April-June 2023 was 1,000 colonies, or 15 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April-June with 2,600 colonies renovated, or 35 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was January-March, with 200 colonies renovated, or 4 percent. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during all quarters surveyed in 2022. The quarter of October-December 2022 had the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 33.4 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January-March 2023 and April-June 2023 was 14.5 percent and 31.1 percent, respectively.

Number of Colonies, Maximum, Lost, Percent Lost, Added, Renovated, and Percent Renovated with Five or More Colonies in West Virginia

Quarter	Number of colonies	Maximum colonies ¹	Lost colonies	Percent lost ²	Added colonies	Renovated colonies ³	Percent renovated ⁴
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 22	4,600	5,000	1,000	20	1,000	200	4
Apr-Jun 22	5,000	7,500	260	3	2,400	2,600	35
Jul-Sep 22	8,000	8,000	360	5	520	660	8
Oct-Dec 22	7,500	8,000	1,100	14	0	220	3
Jan-Mar 23	5,000	6,000	600	10	40	40	1
Apr-Jun 23	5,500	6,500	350	5	1,400	1,000	15

¹ Number of colonies at the beginning of quarter plus all colonies moved into the state during the quarter. ² Percent lost is the number of lost colonies divided by maximum colonies. ³ Defined as any surviving colony that was requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package. ⁴ Percent renovated is the number of renovated colonies divided by maximum colonies.

United States - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States on January 1, 2023 totaled 2.68 million colonies, down 7 percent from January 1, 2022. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2023, was 2.71 million colonies. During 2022, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.88 million, 2.91 million, 3.11 million, and 2.89 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2023, was 373,880 colonies, or 14 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2023, was 237,350 colonies, or 9 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2022, colonies lost totaled 363,570 colonies, or 13 percent, the highest number lost of any quarter surveyed in 2022. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the lowest number of colonies lost was January through March, with 331,480 colonies lost, or 12 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2023 was 384,790 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2023 was 596,360. During the quarter of April through June 2022, the number of colonies added were 573,160 colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2022. The quarter of July through September 2022 added 152,640 colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2022.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2023 was 113,440 colonies, or 4 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2023, the number of colonies renovated were 478,440 colonies, or 18 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June 2022 with 494,890 colonies renovated, or 17 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2022 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2022, with 147,950, or 5 percent. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through a nucleus (nuc) colony or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during all quarters surveyed in 2022. The period with the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites was April through June 2022 at 47.5 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2023 and April through June 2023 are 39.7 percent and 50.9 percent, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms on operations with five or more colonies was 107,630 colonies from January through March 2023. This represents a 25 percent increase from the same quarter in 2022.