

Wisconsin Honey Production Declines 14 Percent

Honey production in Wisconsin during 2003 totaled 5.70 million pounds, down 14 percent from the 6.65 million pounds produced in 2002. Honey producing colonies increased 4,000 to 74,000, colonies. This number does not include producers with less than five colonies, producers who did not harvest honey, or producers who fed the honey back to the bees. Yield per colony declined 18 pounds to 77 pounds per colony in 2003. Even with the increase in colonies, the decline in yield kept Wisconsin ranked eighth in the nation for honey production. Wisconsin dropped from the fourth highest reported yield per colony in the United States to the ninth highest.

On December 15, 2003, Wisconsin honey producers held 2.68 million pounds of honey in stocks. A year earlier, 2.46 million pounds were in storage.

Wisconsin's 2003 honey crop was valued at \$8.21 million, down 8 percent from last year's \$8.91 million. Prices averaged \$1.44 per pound, an increase of ten cents from the previous year.

Nationally, honey production in 2003 totaled 181 million pounds, up 5 percent from 2002. There were 2.59 million colonies producing honey in 2003, an increase of 1 percent. Yield per colony averaged 69.9 pounds, up 5 percent from the 66.7 pounds in 2002. On December 15, 2003, producer honey stocks totaled 40.7 million pounds, 3 percent above a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude stocks held under the commodity loan program.

Honey prices in the U.S. increased to a record high at \$1.40, up 6 percent from \$1.33 in 2002. Honey prices for 2003 were higher than the previous year for all color classes. Some 2002 crop honey was sold at the higher prices in 2003, which caused revisions to the 2002 crop prices. Prices are based on retail sales by producers and sales to private processors and cooperatives. State level honey prices reflect the portions of honey sold through retail, co-op, and private channels. U.S. honey prices for each color class were derived by weighting quantities sold through each marketing channel at the national level.

Honey Production

State	No. of colonies		Production		Average price		Honey stocks Dec. 15 1/	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
	Thousands		Thous. lbs.		Cents per lb.		Thous. lbs.	
Wisconsin	70	74	6,650	5,698	134	144	2,461	2,678
Arizona	38	40	2,394	2,880	108	138	1,197	1,123
Arkansas	45	40	3,960	3,000	126	127	871	810
California	470	480	23,500	32,160	132	142	3,525	6,432
Colorado	24	24	1,440	2,064	129	138	576	722
Florida	220	210	20,460	14,910	114	135	2,026	1,491
Georgia	50	52	2,600	3,380	113	128	52	270
Idaho	100	100	5,700	4,600	137	135	1,653	1,380
Iowa	33	32	2,310	1,888	143	145	901	868
Louisiana	35	34	4,340	3,060	116	124	347	275
Michigan	72	65	5,544	4,810	140	147	1,885	1,732
Minnesota	117	120	8,541	9,960	147	146	1,110	1,892
Montana	134	145	8,442	9,570	138	148	1,097	1,914
Nebraska	43	45	3,225	3,330	149	143	1,161	1,299
New York	60	67	5,880	4,824	125	140	2,470	1,640
N. Dakota	320	340	24,000	29,580	146	136	8,160	6,803
Oregon	43	42	2,107	2,142	135	126	885	964
S. Dakota	225	200	11,475	14,000	142	146	2,410	2,520
Texas	114	140	7,638	9,380	114	142	985	1,126
Washington	50	56	2,550	3,248	127	152	561	942
Wyoming	38	81	2,394	3,159	133	140	383	474
U.S.	2,574	2,590	171,718	181,096	132.7	140.4	39,393	40,735

1/Stocks held by producers do not include stocks under loan. Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service.