



Iowa Ag News – Honey Bee Colonies



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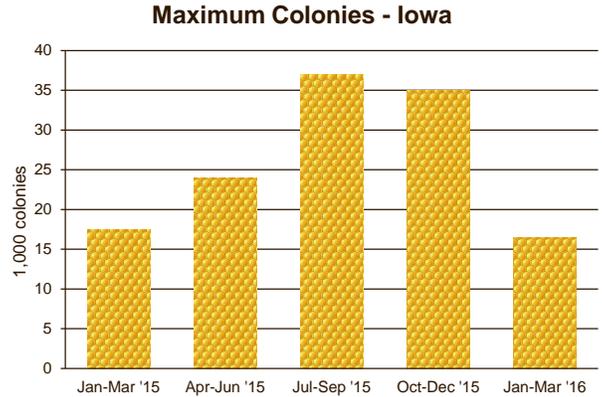
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Honey bee colonies for operations with 5 or more colonies in Iowa as of January 1, 2016 totaled 16.5 thousand colonies. This is 32 percent above the 12.5 thousand colonies on January 1, 2015. During 2015, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 12.5 thousand, 29.0 thousand, and 35.0 thousand, respectively. The quarter of July-September 2015 had the largest maximum number of colonies, with 37.0 thousand, while January-March 2016 had the smallest maximum number of colonies with 16.5 thousand.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with 5 or more colonies during the quarter of January-March 2016 was 3,200, 3 percent above the number lost during the same quarter the year before. With 19 percent of the maximum colonies lost, this was the highest percent of colonies lost during the 5 quarters. The quarter April-June 2015, at 6 percent or 1,400 colonies, showed the smallest loss.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with 5 or more colonies during each of the quarters surveyed. The quarter of January-March 2016 showed varroa mites affected 41.6 percent of Iowa's honey bee colonies. The quarter of October-December 2015 showed the highest percentage affected by varroa mites at 53.4 percent.



Honey Bee Colonies – Iowa: 2015-2016

[Operations with 5 or more colonies.]

	First of the quarter number of colonies ¹	Maximum colonies ²	Lost colonies	Percent lost ³	Added colonies	Renovated colonies ⁴	Percent renovated ⁵
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2015	12,500	17,500	3,100	18	1,700	270	2
Apr-Jun 2015	12,500	24,000	1,400	6	6,500	3,100	13
Jul-Sep 2015	29,000	37,000	3,000	8	640	680	2
Oct-Dec 2015	35,000	35,000	4,300	12	40	30	(Z)
Jan-Mar 2016	16,500	16,500	3,200	19	90	-	-

- Represents zero.

(Z) Less than half of the unit shown.

¹ Number of colonies in the state as of the first day of the quarter.

² Number of colonies in the state on the first day of the quarter plus all colonies moved into state during the quarter.

³ Percent lost is the number of lost colonies divided by the maximum colonies.

⁴ Defined as any surviving colony that was requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package.

⁵ Percent renovated is the number of renovated colonies divided by the maximum colonies.

Colony Health – Iowa: 2015-2016

[Operations with 5 or more colonies, percent of colonies affected by stressor. A colony may be affected by multiple stressors.]

	Varroa mites	Other pests and parasites ¹	Diseases ²	Pesticides	Other ³	Unknown
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2015	26.0	0.7	4.6	3.4	18.0	3.4
Apr-Jun 2015	21.5	5.1	2.9	7.8	2.7	1.9
Jul-Sep 2015	17.4	5.8	0.1	4.7	5.6	3.4
Oct-Dec 2015	53.4	0.9	0.6	6.4	24.8	1.4
Jan-Mar 2016	41.6	0.5	(Z)	2.1	34.4	12.2

(Z) Less than half of the unit shown.

¹ Tracheal mites, nosea, hive beetle, wax moths, etc.

² Includes American and European foulbrood, chalkbrood, stonebrood, paralysis (acute and chronic), kashmir, deformed wing, sabrood, IAPV, Lake Sinai II, etc.

³ Includes weather, starvation, insufficient forage, queen failure, hive damage/destroyed, etc.

UNITED STATES HONEY BEE COLONIES

Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States as of January 1, 2016 totaled 2.59 million. This is 8 percent below the 2.82 million colonies on January 1, 2015. During 2015, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.85 million, 3.13 million, and 2.87 million, respectively. Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies during the quarter of January-March 2016, was 429 thousand colonies or 17 percent lost. The quarter of January-March 2015 had a loss of 500 thousand colonies or 18 percent, the highest honey bee colonies loss of the five quarters. The quarter of April-June 2015, at 353 thousand or 12 percent, showed the least amount of lost honey bee colonies.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during each of the quarters surveyed. The quarter of January-March 2016 showed varroa mites at 34.3 percent. The quarter of April-June 2015 showed the highest percentage of varroa mites at 43.4 percent affected.

Colonies with loss reported that met all of the following criteria: 1) Little to no build-up of dead bees in the hive or at the hive entrance 2) Rapid loss of adult honey bee population despite the presence of queen, capped brood, and food reserves 3) Absence or delayed robbing of the food reserves 4) Loss not attributable to varroa or nosema loads, peaked at 114 thousand colonies lost during January-March 2016. That same quarter a year ago showed 92.3 thousand colonies lost.