



Iowa Ag News – Honey Bee Colonies

Upper Midwest Region - Iowa Field Office · 210 Walnut Street Ste 833 · Des Moines IA 50309 · (515) 284-4340 · (800) 772-0825
fax (855) 271-9802 · www.nass.usda.gov

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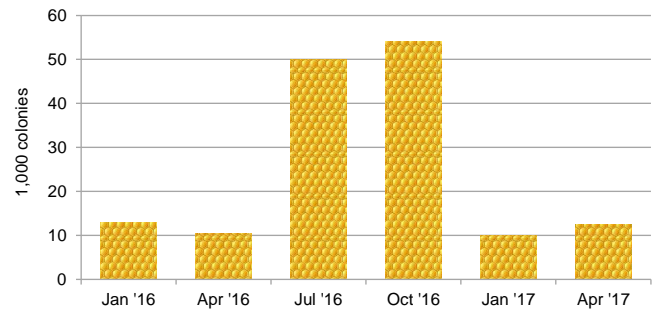
Media Contact: Greg Thessen

Honey bee colonies for operations with 5 or more colonies in Iowa as of April 1, 2017, totaled 12,500 colonies. This is 19 percent above the 10,500 colonies on April 1, 2016, and 25 percent above January 1 2017. Producers boosted their April 1 inventory by moving colonies into Iowa and adding colonies to a maximum of 23,000 during the April-June 2017. The largest maximum number of colonies in the last 6 quarters, at 54,000, occurred in the October-December 2016 quarter while January-March 2016 had the smallest maximum number of colonies at 13,000.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with 5 or more colonies for the April-June 2017 quarter was 2,000, or 9 percent. This was the smallest number lost in the past year and was 17 percent below a year earlier and 33 percent below last quarter. In the past 6 quarters surveyed the largest percent of the colonies lost, at 22 percent, occurred in the January-March 2016 quarter. The largest number that was lost was 5,500 colonies and occurred in the July-September 2016 quarter.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with 5 or more colonies during each of the quarters surveyed. The quarter of April-June 2017 showed varroa mites affected 39.4 percent of Iowa's honey bee colonies, the highest level in the past year. Other Pests and Parasites and the Pesticides categories saw substantial increases this quarter.

**Number of Colonies - Iowa
First Day of the Quarter**



Honey Bee Colonies – Iowa: 2016-2017

[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 2016	13,000	13,000	2,900	22	90	-	-
Apr-Jun 2016	10,500	26,000	2,400	9	26,000	760	3
Jul-Sep 2016	50,000	50,000	5,500	11	10,500	2,400	5
Oct-Dec 2016	54,000	54,000	4,700	9	-	20	(Z)
Jan-Mar 2017	10,000	15,500	3,000	19	70	-	-
Apr-Jun 2017	12,500	23,000	2,000	9	24,000	3,900	17

- 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: 2016-2017

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

	Varroa mites	Other pests and parasites ¹	Diseases ²	Pesticides	Other ³	Unknown
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2016	52.8	14.4	13.8	2.7	24.0	4.8
Apr-Jun 2016	23.5	17.8	18.7	0.6	6.0	5.7
Jul-Sep 2016	32.6	3.4	0.8	16.7	2.4	5.6
Oct-Dec 2016	18.7	9.8	8.9	9.0	11.4	6.3
Jan-Mar 2017	33.6	8.3	8.4	12.0	11.9	11.7
Apr-Jun 2017	39.4	27.7	7.6	26.7	8.2	0.9

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 on January 1, 2017 totaled 2.62 million colonies, down slightly from January 1, 2016. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2017, was 2.89 million colonies. During 2016, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.62 million, 2.80 million, 3.18 million, and 3.03 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2017, was 362 thousand colonies, or 14 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2017 was 226 thousand colonies, or 8 percent. During the quarter of October through December 2016, colonies lost totaled 502 thousand colonies, or 17 percent, the highest of any quarter in 2016. The quarter in 2016 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April through June, with 330 thousand colonies lost, or 12 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2017 was 586 thousand colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2017 was 653 thousand. During the quarter of April through June 2016, 737 thousand colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2016. The quarter of October through December 2016 added 125 thousand colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2016.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2017 was 240 thousand colonies, or 9 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2017, 806 thousand colonies, or 28 percent, were renovated. The quarter in 2016 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June with 561 thousand colonies renovated, or 20 percent. The quarter in 2016 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2016, with 60.4 thousand or 2 percent. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through a nuc or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during all quarters of 2016. The quarter of April through June 2016 had highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 53.4 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2017 and April through June 2017 are 42.2 percent and 41.6 percent, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms on operations with five or more colonies was 84.4 thousand colonies from January through March 2017. This is a 27 percent decrease from the same quarter of 2016. Colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder Symptoms were reported to meet 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.