



# Iowa Ag News – Honey Bee Colonies

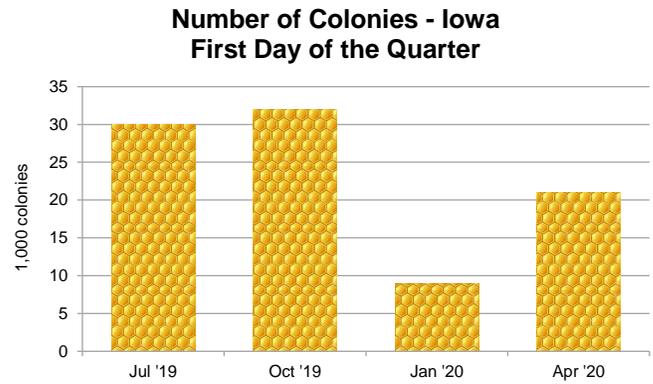
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Cooperating with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

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Honey bee colonies for operations with 5 or more colonies in Iowa as of January 1, 2020, totaled 9,000 colonies. This is 20% above the 7,500 colonies on January 1 last year, and 72% below the 32,000 colonies during the October-December 2019 quarter. Producers boosted their January 1 inventory by moving colonies into Iowa and adding colonies to a maximum of 21,000 during the January-March 2020 quarter. Since January 2019 the October-December 2019 quarter had the largest maximum number of colonies, with 32,000, while January-March 2019 quarter had the smallest maximum number of colonies with 11,500.



Honey bee colonies lost for operations with 5 or more colonies for the January-March 2020 quarter was 1,600 or 8%. This was 6 percentage points below the same period last year and 15 percentage points below losses reported during the October-December 2019 quarter. Since January 2019 the largest percentage of the colonies lost, at 23%, or 7,500 colonies, occurred in the October-December 2019 quarter. The January-March 2019 and 2020 quarters tied for the fewest number of colonies lost, at 1,600 colonies.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with 5 or more colonies since January 2019. The January-March 2020 quarter showed varroa mites affected 22.3% of Iowa's honey bee colonies. Other Pests and Parasites, Diseases, Pesticides, and Other Causes categories all saw sharp declines in percent stressed in the January-March 2020 quarter from the October-December 2019 quarter.

## Honey Bee Colonies – Iowa: 2019-2020

[Operations with 5 or more colonies.]

	First of the quarter number of colonies <sup>1</sup>	Maximum colonies <sup>2</sup>	Lost colonies	Percent lost <sup>3</sup>	Added colonies	Renovated colonies <sup>4</sup>	Percent renovated <sup>5</sup>
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2019 .....	7,500	11,500	1,600	14	170	140	1
Apr-Jun 2019 <sup>6</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Jul-Sep 2019 .....	30,000	33,000	3,400	10	2,000	4,800	15
Oct-Dec 2019 .....	32,000	32,000	7,500	23	1,500	530	2
Jan-Mar 2020 .....	9,000	21,000	1,600	8	1,200	420	2
Apr-Jun 2020 .....	21,000	29,000	3,600	12	14,500	4,700	16

(NA) Not available.

<sup>1</sup> Number of colonies in the state as of the first day of the quarter.

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

<sup>3</sup> Percent lost is the number of lost colonies divided by the maximum colonies.

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

<sup>5</sup> Percent renovated is the number of renovated colonies divided by the maximum colonies.

<sup>6</sup> Quarterly data collection suspended for the April-June 2019 quarter.

## Colony Health – Iowa: 2019-2020

[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 <sup>1</sup>	Diseases <sup>2</sup>	Pesticides	Other <sup>3</sup>	Unknown
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2019 .....	34.8	1.7	0.6	0.3	7.7	3.5
Apr-Jun 2019 <sup>4</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Jul-Sep 2019 .....	39.4	7.1	5.8	26.3	27.8	3.6
Oct-Dec 2019 .....	61.0	17.8	5.6	25.2	19.7	4.2
Jan-Mar 2020 .....	22.3	1.9	-	0.2	5.7	5.5
Apr-Jun 2020 .....	30.4	24.6	16.5	0.8	3.5	0.5

(NA) Not available.

- Represents zero.

<sup>1</sup> Tracheal mites, nosea, hive beetle, wax moths, etc.

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

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

<sup>4</sup> Quarterly data collection suspended for the April-June 2019 quarter.

## UNITED STATES HONEY BEE COLONIES

Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States on January 1, 2020, totaled 2.88 million colonies, up 8% from January 1, 2019. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2020, was 2.98 million colonies. During 2019, honey bee colonies on January 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.67 million, 3.18 million, and 3.02 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2020, was 399,570 colonies, or 14%. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2020 was 252,630 colonies, or 8%. During the quarter of July through September 2019, colonies lost totaled 434,700 colonies, or 14%, the highest number lost of any quarter surveyed in 2019. The quarter surveyed in 2019 with the lowest number of colonies lost was October through December, with 399,510 colonies lost, or 13%.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2020 was 477,200 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2020 was 596,860. During the quarter of July through September 2019, 252,550 colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2019. The quarter of October through December 2019 added 233,260 colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2019.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2020 was 153,390 colonies, or 5%. During the quarter of April through June 2020, 632,680 colonies, or 21%, were renovated. The quarter surveyed in 2019 with the highest number of colonies renovated was July through September with 355,330 colonies renovated, or 11%. The quarter surveyed in 2019 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2019, with 91,000, or 3%. 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 surveyed in 2019. The quarter of October through December 2019 had the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 45.7%. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2020 and April through June 2020 are 25.5% and 42.3%, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms on operations with five or more colonies was 105,240 colonies from January through March 2020. This is a 76% increase from the same quarter of 2019.