



# NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
In Cooperation with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 20, 2016

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## Kentucky Honey Bee Colonies

**Louisville, Kentucky - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies** in Kentucky as of January 1, 2016 totaled 7,000. This is 7 percent below the 7,500 colonies on January 1, 2015. During 2015, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 7,500, 10,000, and 8,500, respectively.

**Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies** during the quarter of January-March 2016, were 1,300 colonies or 19 percent lost. The quarter of January-March 2015 had a loss of 4,100 colonies or 39 percent, the highest honey bee colonies loss of the five quarters. The quarter of April-June 2015, at 980 colonies or 12 percent, showed the least amount of lost honey bee colonies.

**Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies** during the quarter of January-March 2016 were 110 colonies. The quarter of April-June 2015, added 3,600 colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies added of the five quarters. The quarter of October-December 2015 added 20, the lowest number of colonies added of the five quarters.

**Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies** during the quarter of January-March 2016 were 70. The number of colonies renovated during the quarter of April-June 2015 was 590, the highest number of honey bee colonies renovated. The number of colonies renovated during January-March 2015 was zero, the lowest number of honey bee colonies renovated. 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 each of the quarters surveyed. The quarter of January-March 2016 showed varroa mites at 20.9 percent. The quarter of July-September 2015, at 40.4 percent, showed the most amount of varroa mites. The quarter of January-March 2015, at 10.8 percent, showed the least amount of varroa mites.

**United States - Honey bee colonies for operations with less than five colonies** in the United States on January 1, 2015 were 50.0 thousand. Honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1, 2015 were 43,000, 52,000, and 49,000, respectively. Unknown colony health stressors (includes weather, starvation, insufficient forage, queen failure, hive damage/destroyed, etc.), at 20.8 percent, were the highest for operations with less than five colonies during 2015. Varroa mites were the next ranked stressor at 19.8 percent.

### Number of Colonies, Maximum, Lost, Percent Lost, Added, Renovated, and Percent Renovated with Five or More Colonies in Kentucky

Quarter	Number of colonies <sup>1</sup>	Maximum colonies	Lost colonies	Percent lost <sup>2</sup>	Added colonies	Renovated colonies <sup>3</sup>	Percent renovated <sup>4</sup>
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 15	7,500	10,500	4,100	39	250	0	0
Apr-Jun 15	7,500	8,500	980	12	3,600	1,500	18
Jul-Sep 15	10,000	10,000	1,300	13	170	550	6
Oct-Dec 15	8,500	8,500	1,100	13	20	10	<1
Jan-Mar 16	7,000	7,000	1,300	19	110	70	1

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

National release: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/nass/BeeColonies/2010s/2016/BeeColonies-05-12-2016.pdf>  
National honey bee colony briefing: [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/Executive\\_Briefings/2016/05\\_12\\_2016.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/Executive_Briefings/2016/05_12_2016.pdf)