



REGIONAL NEWS RELEASE

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January 1 Honey Bee Colonies Down Slightly for Operations with Five or More Colonies

Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States on January 1, 2018 totaled 2.63 million colonies, down slightly from January 1, 2017. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2018 was 2.69 million colonies. During 2017, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.64 million, 2.69 million, 2.99 million, and 2.85 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2018, was 425 thousand colonies, or 16 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2018 was 270 thousand colonies, or 10 percent. During the quarter of October through December 2017, colonies lost totaled 425 thousand colonies, or 15 percent, the highest of any quarter in 2017. The quarter in 2017 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April through June, with 286 thousand colonies lost, or 11 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2018 was 513 thousand colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2018 was 726 thousand. During the quarter of April through June 2017, 613 thousand colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2017. The quarter of October through December 2017 added 205 thousand colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2017.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2018 was 289 thousand colonies, or 11 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2018, 715 thousand colonies, or 27 percent, were renovated. The quarter in 2017 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June with 763 thousand colonies renovated, or 28 percent. The quarter in 2017 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2017, with 214 thousand or 8 percent. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through a nuc or package.

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January 1 Honey Bee Colonies Down 9 Percent for Operations with Less than Five Colonies

Honey bee colonies for operations with less than five colonies in the United States on January 1, 2017 totaled 40.0 thousand down 9 percent from January 1, 2016. During 2017, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 35.0 thousand, 43.0 thousand, and 39.0 thousand, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with less than five colonies during the quarter of January through March 2017 was 13.5 thousand colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies lost during any quarter for 2017. The quarter in 2017 with the least number of colonies lost was April through June, with 4.20 thousand colonies.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with less than five colonies during the quarter of April through June 2017 was 12.5 thousand colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies added during any quarter of 2017. The quarter in 2017 with the least number of colonies added was October through December, with 960 colonies.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with less than five colonies during the quarter of April through June 2017 was 4.40 thousand colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies renovated during any quarter of 2017. The quarter in 2017 with the least number of colonies renovated was October through December, with 1.10 thousand colonies.

During 2017, the highest reported colony stressor was varroa mites, with 26.3 percent of the colonies reported to be affected. This is a 5 percent increase from the previous year.

Honey bee colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms on operations with less than five colonies was 6.00 thousand colonies during 2017, a 9 percent increase from 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.

For a full copy of the *Honey Bee Colonies* report please visit www.nass.usda.gov. For state specific questions please contact:

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