



NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
 In Cooperation with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture
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West Virginia Honey Bee Colonies

Charleston, West Virginia - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in West Virginia as of January 1, 2019 totaled 5,000, up 6 percent from January 1, 2018. During 2018, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 7,000, 7,500, and 7,000, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2019, were 1,300 colonies or 19 percent. During the quarter of January-March 2018, colonies lost totaled 2,500 colonies or 29 percent, the highest of any quarter in 2018. The quarter in 2018 with the lowest number of colonies lost was July-September, with 520 colonies lost or 7 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2019 were 20 colonies. During the quarter of April-June 2018, 2,300 colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2018. The quarter of October-December 2018 added 50 colonies, the lowest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2018.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2019 were 60, or 1 percent. The quarter in 2018 with the highest number of colonies renovated was July-September with 1,200 colonies renovated, or 15 percent. The quarter in 2018 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was January-March, with 60 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 most quarters of 2018, except the January-March quarter where other stressors (weather, starvation, insufficient forage, queen failure, hive damage/destroyed, etc.) was the highest at 20.8 percent. The quarter of July-September 2018 had highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 57.0 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January-March 2019 was 10.3 percent.

Number of Colonies, Maximum, Lost, Percent Lost, Added, Renovated, and Percent Renovated with Five or More Colonies in West Virginia

Quarter	Number of colonies	Maximum colonies ¹	Lost colonies	Percent lost ²	Added colonies	Renovated colonies ³	Percent renovated ⁴
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 18	4,700	8,500	2,500	29	330	60	1
Apr-Jun 18	7,000	7,000	570	8	2,300	550	8
Jul-Sep 18	7,500	8,000	520	7	170	1,200	15
Oct-Dec 18	7,000	7,000	1,200	17	50	70	1
Jan-Mar 19	5,000	7,000	1,300	19	20	60	1

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

United States - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States on January 1, 2019 totaled 2.67 million colonies, up 1 percent from January 1, 2018. During 2018, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.64 million, 2.67 million, 2.96 million, and 2.87 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2019, was 408 thousand colonies, or 15 percent. During the quarter of October through December 2018, colonies lost totaled 445 thousand colonies, or 16 percent, the highest number lost of any quarter in 2018. The quarter in 2018 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April through June, with 355 thousand colonies lost, or 13 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2019 was 248 thousand colonies. During the quarter of April through June 2018, 676 thousand colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2018. The quarter of October through December 2018 added 220 thousand colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2018.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2019 was 180 thousand colonies, or 7 percent. The quarter in 2018 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June with 740 thousand colonies renovated, or 28 percent. The quarter in 2018 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2018, with 155 thousand, or 5 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 2018. The quarter of April through June 2018 had the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 56.4 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2019 were 45.6 percent.

Note: Data collection for July 2019 quarterly honey bee colonies has been suspended. Before deciding to suspend data collection, NASS reviewed its estimating programs against mission- and user-based criteria as well as the amount of time remaining in the fiscal year to meet its budget and program requirements while maintaining the strongest data in service to U.S. agriculture. Information about all NASS surveys and reports is available online at www.nass.usda.gov.