United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Wisconsin Ag News – Honey Bee Colonies

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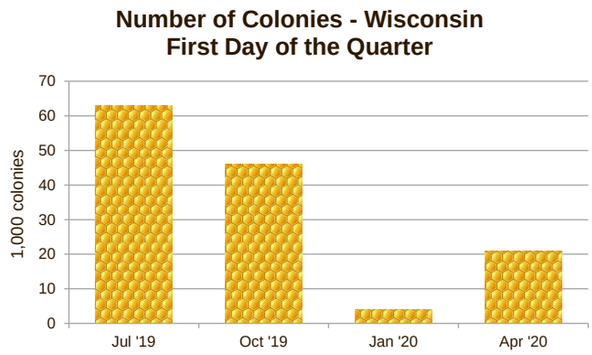
August 3, 2020 *Media Contact: Greg Bussler*

Honey bee colonies for operations with 5 or more colonies in Wisconsin as of January 1, 2020, totaled 16,000 colonies. This is 3% below the 16,500 colonies on January 1 last year, and 65% below the 46,000 colonies during the October-December 2019 quarter. Producers boosted their January 1 inventory by moving colonies into Wisconsin and adding colonies to a maximum of 26,000 during the January-March 2020 quarter. Since January 2019 the July-September 2019 quarter had the largest maximum number of colonies, with 63,000, while the January-March 2019 quarter had the smallest maximum number of colonies with 17,000.



Honey bee colonies lost for operations with 5 or more colonies for the January-March 2020 quarter was 1,500 colonies or 6%. This was 16 percentage points below the same period last year and 12 percentage points below losses reported during the October-December 2019 quarter. Since January 2019 the largest percentage of the colonies lost, at 22%, occurred in the January-March 2019 quarter. The largest number of colonies lost was 8,500 colonies and occurred in the October-December 2019 quarter.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with 5 or more colonies since January 2019. Producers reported that varroa mites affected 9.0% of Wisconsin's honey bee colonies for the January-March 2020 quarter. The July-September 2019 quarter showed the highest percentage affected by varroa mites at 46.4%.

Honey Bee Colonies – Wisconsin: 2019-2020

[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 2019	16,500	17,000	3,700	22	580	100	1
Apr-Jun 2019 [6]	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Jul-Sep 2019	63,000	63,000	6,500	10	2,400	10,000	16
Oct-Dec 2019	46,000	46,000	8,500	18	1,800	3,000	7
Jan-Mar 2020	16,000	26,000	1,500	6	2,000	370	1
Apr-Jun 2020	27,000	53,000	1,700	3	11,500	4,600	9

(NA) Not available.
[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.
[6] Quarterly data collection suspended for the April-June 2019 quarter.

Colony Health – Wisconsin: 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 [1]	Diseases [2]	Pesticides	Other [3]	Unknown
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2019	15.9	3.2	0.7	1.1	13.8	5.0
Apr-Jun 2019 [4]	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Jul-Sep 2019	46.4	20.5	13.9	18.1	6.5	3.9
Oct-Dec 2019	40.0	22.1	14.8	14.1	22.0	7.3
Jan-Mar 2020	9.0	1.9	0.4	(Z)	2.7	3.1
Apr-Jun 2020	46.1	27.3	25.0	25.1	25.8	26.1

(NA) Not available.
(Z) Less than half the unit shown.
[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.
[4] 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.