



Wisconsin Ag News – Honey Bee Colonies

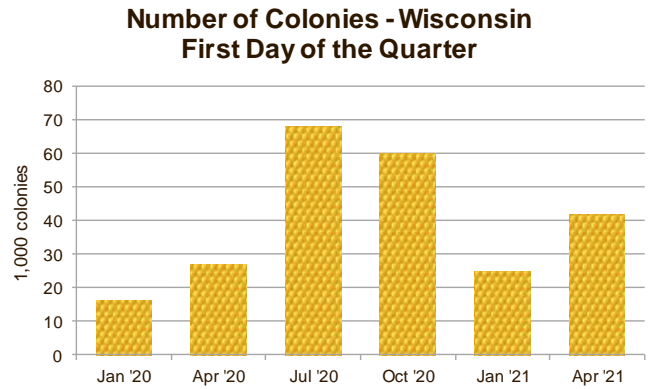
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Honey bee colonies for operations with 5 or more colonies in Wisconsin as of January 1, 2021, totaled 25,000 colonies. This is 56% above the 16,000 colonies on January 1 last year, but 58% below the 60,000 colonies during the October-December 2020 quarter. Producers boosted their January 1 inventory by moving colonies into Wisconsin and adding colonies to a maximum of 37,000 during the January-March 2021 quarter. Since January 2020 the July-September 2020 quarter had the largest maximum number of colonies, at 68,000, while the January-March 2020 quarter had the smallest maximum number of colonies at 28,000.



Honey bee colonies lost for operations with 5 or more colonies for the January-March 2021 quarter was 2,500 colonies or 7%. This was the same percentage as the same period last year but 6 percentage points below losses reported during the October-December 2020 quarter. Since January 2020 the largest percentage of the colonies lost, at 13%, occurred in the October-December 2020 quarter. The largest number of colonies lost was 8,000 colonies and occurred in both the July-September 2020 and the October-December 2020 quarters.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with 5 or more colonies from January 2020 thru March 2021. The April-June 2020 quarter showed the highest percentage affected by varroa mites at 46.1%. During the April-June 2021 quarter, producers reported that pesticides were the leading stressor at 22.3% of colonies.

Honey Bee Colonies – Wisconsin: 2020-2021

[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 2020	16,000	28,000	1,900	7	700	370	1.0
Apr-Jun 2020	27,000	55,000	1,700	3	14,000	4,600	8.0
Jul-Sep 2020	68,000	68,000	8,000	12	970	9,000	13.0
Oct-Dec 2020	60,000	60,000	8,000	13	2,800	4,700	8.0
Jan-Mar 2021	25,000	37,000	2,500	7	7,000	170	(Z)
Apr-Jun 2021	42,000	57,000	2,200	4	9,000	7,500	13.0

(Z) Less than half the unit shown.

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.

Colony Health – Wisconsin: 2020-2021

[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 2020	9.0	1.9	(Z)	(Z)	2.7	3.1
Apr-Jun 2020 ⁴	46.1	27.3	25.0	25.1	25.8	26.1
Jul-Sep 2020	43.1	22.8	12.9	26.1	13.8	20.4
Oct-Dec 2020	29.3	0.6	(Z)	7.4	1.8	1.2
Jan-Mar 2021	16.1	(Z)	(Z)	0.0	3.6	3.2
Apr-Jun 2021	14.9	17.8	1.1	22.3	1.0	2.0

(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.

UNITED STATES HONEY BEE COLONIES

Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States on January 1, 2021 totaled 2.92 million colonies, up 2% from January 1, 2020. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2021, was 2.86 million colonies. During 2020, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.88 million, 2.97 million, 3.18 million, and 3.14 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2021, was 372,630 colonies, or 13%. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2021 was 255,860 colonies, or 9%. During the quarter of October through December 2020, colonies lost totaled 484,920 colonies, or 15%, the highest number lost of any quarter surveyed in 2020. The quarter surveyed in 2020 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April through June, with 300,990 colonies lost, or 10%.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2021 was 308,530 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2021 was 677,690. During the quarter of April through June 2020, the number of colonies added were 536,170 colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2020. The quarter of October through December 2020 added 271,500 colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2020.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2021 was 156,270 colonies, or 5%. During the quarter of April through June 2021, the number of colonies renovated were 480,380 colonies, or 17%. The quarter surveyed in 2020 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June with 626,870 colonies renovated, or 21%. The quarter surveyed in 2020 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2020, with 128,990, or 4%. 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 2020. The period with the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites was July through September 2020 at 55.7%. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2021 and April through June 2021 are 31.3% and 48.7%, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms on operations with five or more colonies was 76,930 colonies from January through March 2021. This represents a 27% decrease from the same quarter in 2020.