



# Iowa Ag News – Honey Bee Colonies

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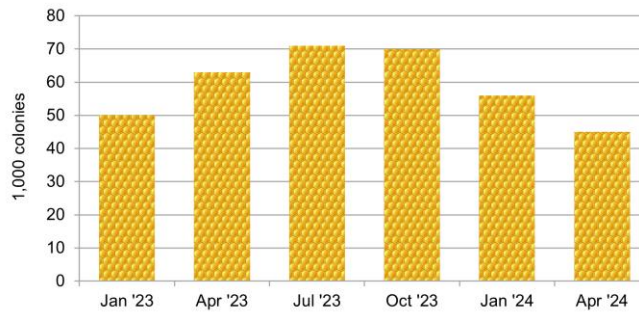
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Honey bee colonies for operations with 5 or more colonies in Iowa as of January 1, 2024, totaled 56,000 colonies. This was up 12 percent from the 50,000 colonies on January 1 last year but down 20 percent from the 70,000 colonies on October 1, 2023. The maximum number of colonies during the January-March 2024 quarter was 59,000.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with 5 or more colonies for the January-March 2024 quarter was 1,900, or 3 percent. This percent was unchanged from the same period last year but up 1 percentage point from losses reported during the October-December 2023 quarter.

Varroa mites was the number one stressor for operations with 5 or more colonies in all of 2023.

**Number of Colonies - Iowa  
First Day of the Quarter**



## Honey Bee Colonies – Iowa: 2023-2024

[Operations with 5 or more colonies.]

	First of the quarter number of colonies <sup>1</sup>	Maximum colonies <sup>2</sup>	Lost colonies	Percent lost <sup>3</sup>	Added colonies	Renovated colonies <sup>4</sup>	Percent renovated <sup>5</sup>
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2023 ...	50,000	64,000	1,700	3	210	240	(Z)
Apr-Jun 2023 ...	63,000	69,000	3,400	5	11,500	2,700	4
Jul-Sep 2023 ...	71,000	71,000	1,800	3	670	720	1
Oct-Dec 2023 ...	70,000	70,000	1,700	2	530	120	(Z)
Jan-Mar 2024 ...	56,000	59,000	1,900	3	2,700	0	(Z)
Apr-Jun 2024 ...	45,000	46,000	3,300	7	6,000	9,000	20

(Z) Less than half of the unit shown.

- <sup>1</sup> Number of colonies in the state as of the first day of the quarter.
- <sup>2</sup> Number of colonies in the state on the first day of the quarter plus all colonies moved into state during the quarter.
- <sup>3</sup> Percent lost is the number of lost colonies divided by the maximum colonies.
- <sup>4</sup> Defined as any surviving colony that was requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package.
- <sup>5</sup> Percent renovated is the number of renovated colonies divided by the maximum colonies.

## Colony Health – Iowa: 2023-2024

	Varroa mites	Other pests and parasites <sup>1</sup>	Diseases <sup>2</sup>	Pesticides	Other <sup>3</sup>	Unknown
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 2023 ...	26.9	1.0	1.3	2.2	1.4	3.2
Apr-Jun 2023 ....	17.9	2.6	4.5	9.9	5.1	(Z)
Jul-Sep 2023 ....	24.4	0.7	(Z)	14.6	2.0	14.4
Oct-Dec 2023 ...	19.1	12.1	(Z)	12.1	0.9	(Z)
Jan-Mar 2024 ...	15.0	0.7	0.7	(Z)	3.2	1.7
Apr-Jun 2024 ....	17.1	7.9	3.3	(Z)	7.8	1.2

(Z) Less than half of the unit shown.

- <sup>1</sup> Tracheal mites, nosea, hive beetle, wax moths, etc.
- <sup>2</sup> Includes American and European foulbrood, chalkbrood, stonebrood, paralysis (acute and chronic), kashmir, deformed wing, sabrood, IAPV, Lake Sinai II, etc.
- <sup>3</sup> 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, 2024, totaled 2.71 million colonies, down 1 percent from January 1, 2023. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2024, was 2.71 million colonies. During 2023, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.73 million, 2.71 million, 2.92 million, and 2.82 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2024, was 396,820 colonies, or 15 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2024, was 288,190 colonies, or 11 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2023, colonies lost totaled 378,190 colonies, or 14 percent, the highest number lost of any quarter surveyed in 2023. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the lowest number of colonies lost was October through December, with 254,520 colonies lost, or 9 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2024 was 404,100 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2024 was 617,420. During the quarter of April through June 2023, the number of colonies added were 618,350 colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2023. The quarter of October through December 2023 added 118,840 colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2023.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2024 was 215,070 colonies, or 8 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2024, the number of colonies renovated were 521,790 colonies, or 19 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June 2023 with 485,640 colonies renovated, or 18 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was January through March 2023, with 113,440, or 4 percent. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through a nucleus (nuc) colony or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during all quarters surveyed in 2023. The period with the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites was April through June 2023 at 52.0 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2024 and April through June 2024 are 43.3 percent and 54.8 percent, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost with Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms on operations with five or more colonies was 70,650 colonies from January through March 2024. This represents a 34 percent decrease from the same quarter in 2023.

The complete report can be found on the USDA NASS website at [www.nass.usda.gov/Publications](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications).