



NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
In Cooperation with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture
West Virginia Field Office
1900 Kanawha Blvd E
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 1, 2024

Contact: Alissa Cowell-Mytar
(304) 357-5126

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, 2024 totaled 6,000, up 20 percent from January 1, 2023. The number of colonies in the State on April 1, 2024 was 6,500. During 2023, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 5,000, 5,500, 7,500 and 8,000, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2024, were 640 colonies, or 9 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April-June 2024 was 380 colonies, or 6 percent. During the quarter of October-December 2023, colonies lost totaled 930, or 12 percent, the highest of any quarter surveyed in 2023. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the lowest number of colonies lost was July-September, with 230 colonies lost, or 3 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2024 were 300 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April-June 2024 was 1,100 colonies. During the quarter of October-December 2023, 2,400 colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter surveyed in 2023. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the lowest number of colonies added was January-March 2023, with 40 added colonies.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2024 were 10 (percent renovated was less than half of a percent). The number of colonies renovated during the quarter of April-June 2024 was 520 colonies, or 8 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April-June with 1,000 colonies renovated, or 15 percent. The quarter surveyed in 2023 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was January- March, with 40 colonies renovated, or 1 percent. 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 all quarters surveyed in 2023. The quarter of April-June 2023 had the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 31.1 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January-March 2024 and April-June 2024 was 12.9 percent and 16.1 percent, respectively.

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 23	5,000	6,000	600	10	40	40	1
Apr-Jun 23	5,500	6,500	350	5	1,300	1,000	15
Jul-Sep 23	7,500	8,000	230	3	400	790	10
Oct-Dec 23	8,000	8,000	930	12	2,400	230	3
Jan-Mar 24	6,000	7,500	640	9	300	10	(Z)
Apr-Jun 24	6,500	6,500	380	6	1,100	520	8

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. (Z) Less than half of the unit shown.

United States - 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.