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Survey Reveals Over 1.1 Million Honey Bee Colonies Lost, Raising Alarm for Pollination and Agriculture

Public Webinar Scheduled to Discuss Scale, Impact of Losses

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, Feb. 20, 2025— A nationwide survey of beekeepers has revealed catastrophic honey bee colony losses across the United States, with commercial operations reporting an **average loss of 62%** between June 2024 and February 2025. These alarming losses, which surpass historical trends, could significantly impact U.S. agriculture, particularly crop pollination for almonds, fruits, vegetables, and other essential food sources.

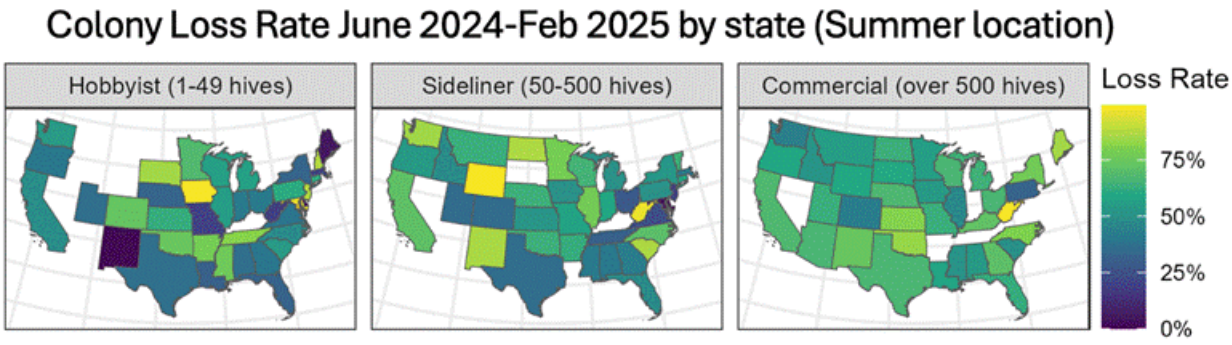
“Early reports of severe colony losses began pouring in last month from beekeepers across the country,” said Danielle Downey, executive director of Project Apis m. “In response, a multi-organizational working group—including Project Apis m., the American Beekeeping Federation, and the American Honey Producers Association—quickly mobilized to launch this survey. The goal was to assess the scope and severity of the losses, gather critical management data, and help guide research efforts to determine potential causes.”

“Initial survey results of colony losses suggest that commercial beekeepers may have lost in excess of 60% of their bees. The scale of these losses is completely unsustainable,” said Zac Browning, a fourth-generation commercial beekeeper and board chairman of Project Apis m. “Honey bees are the backbone of our food system, pollinating the crops that feed our nation. If we continue to see losses at this rate, we simply won’t be able to sustain current food production. The industry must look inward and outward for solutions to chronic bee health failure.”

Administered by Project Apis m., the survey gathered data from 702 beekeepers, covering colony losses, management practices, and potential contributing factors. It is estimated that survey participants account for over 1.835 million colonies, approximately 68% of the nation’s bees. Findings from the survey indicate:

- **Hobbyist beekeepers** (1-49 colonies) lost an average of **50%** of their colonies.

- **Sideliner operations** (50-500 colonies) lost an average of **54%** of their colonies.
- **Commercial beekeepers** (more than 500 colonies) lost an average of **62%**—a reversal of typical trends, where commercial beekeepers generally experience lower losses due to their scale and resources.



These results translate to an estimated 1,123,959 colony losses among respondents, resulting in the following immediate economic losses:

- **Direct colony losses**: Conservatively estimated at $224.8 million (based on a $200 per colony replacement cost, not including labor,feed or treatments).
- **Economic impact**: Factoring in lost almond pollination income based on the survey results, which was estimated at $181 per colony in 2023, the lost income exceeds $428 million.The loss rate to US colonies that were not accounted for in the survey is estimated at an additional $206.4 million in losses, which could equal a **total estimated economic loss of $634.7 million.**

Additional economic impacts not included in this figure include the loss of honey production and pollination contracts for any crops following almonds. This scale of loss could have significant repercussions for pollination businesses and the security of pollination-dependent crops, leading to increasing costs and threatening food security.

Free Public Webinar on February 28 to Share Updates

To help beekeepers, farmers, and policymakers understand the scale of these losses and ongoing research efforts, a free public webinar will be held on February 28, 2025, at 12:00 pm ET, hosted by Project Apis m**.** to share information with stakeholders about progress analyzing the survey data. The webinar will provide updates on:

- Preliminary findings from field samples taken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS).
- Emerging trends from beekeeper survey data.
- Potential management recommendations based on early analyses.

Anyone interested in registering for the webinar can do so at the following link: https://www.projectapism.org/events/i8yr94doxarjvh453lchfhr0xf3bvq

About the Honey Bee Health Coalition

The Honey Bee Health Coalition brings together beekeepers, growers, researchers, government agencies, agribusinesses, conservation groups, manufacturers, brands and other key partners to improve the health of honey bees and other pollinators. Its mission is to collaboratively implement solutions that help achieve a healthy population of honey bees while also supporting populations of native and managed pollinators in the context of productive agricultural systems and thriving ecosystems. The Coalition focuses on accelerating the collective impact of efforts in four key areas: forage and nutrition; hive management; crop pest management; and communications, outreach and education.

The Honey Bee Health Coalition is a project of the Keystone Policy Center, a nationally recognized nonprofit that brings together diverse stakeholders to find collaborative, actionable solutions to public policy challenges.