

# **Gaston County Beekeeper's Association**

**Next Meeting May 26th**

**7 pm Citizens Resource  
Center Dallas, NC**



\*\*\*Bee thinking about the upcoming elections in September, more on that very soon.....

## **Bee Survey: Lower Winter Losses, Higher Summer Losses, Increased Total Annual Losses**

Kim Kaplan WASHINGTON, May 13, 2015 — Losses of managed honey bee colonies were 23.1 percent for the 2014-2015 winter but summer losses exceeded winter numbers for the first time, making annual losses for the year 42.1 percent, according to preliminary results of the annual survey conducted by the Bee Informed Partnership (<http://beeinformed.org>), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Apiary Inspectors of America.

The winter loss improvement was about 0.6 percentage points less than the losses reported for the 2013-2014 winter. This is the second year in a row that winter losses have been noticeably lower than the nine year average winter loss of 28.7 percent.

However, beekeepers are not losing colonies only in the winter but also throughout the summer, sometimes at significant levels. Summer losses for 2014 were reported as 27.4 percent, exceeding 2014-2015 winter losses for the first time. In previous years, 2013 summer losses were reported as 19.8 percent compared to 23.7 percent for 2013-2014 winter losses, and 2012 summer losses were reported as 25.3 percent compared to 30.5 percent for 2012-2013 winter losses. Winter losses were considered October 2014 through April 2015.

Total annual losses were 42.1 percent for April 2014 through April 2015. The new figure is up from 35.2 percent for 2013-2014.

“The winter loss numbers are more hopeful especially combined with the fact that we have not seen much sign of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) for several years, but such high colony losses in the summer and year-round remain very troubling,” said Jeff Pettis, a survey co-author and a senior entomologist at USDA’s Agricultural Research Service Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. “If beekeepers are going to meet the growing demand for pollination services, researchers need to find better answers to the host of stresses that lead to both winter and summer colony losses.”

About two-thirds of the beekeepers responding to the survey reported losses greater than the 18.7 percent level that beekeepers reported is economically acceptable. This underlines the seriousness of the health problems stressing honey bees in this country, Pettis pointed out.

“We traditionally thought of winter losses as a more important indicator of health, because surviving the cold winter months is a crucial test for any bee colony,” said Dennis vanEngelsdorp, an assistant professor of entomology at the University of Maryland and project director for the Bee Informed Partnership. “But we now know that summer loss rates are significant too. This is especially so for

commercial beekeepers, who are now losing more colonies in the summertime compared to the winter. Years ago, this was unheard of.”

Backyard beekeepers were more prone to heavy mite infestations, but we believe that is because a majority of them are not taking appropriate steps to control mites,” vanEngelsdorp said. “Commercial keepers were particularly prone to summer losses. But they typically take more aggressive action against Varroa mites, so there must be other factors at play.”

For these preliminary survey results, more than 6,100 beekeepers across the country who managed almost 400,000 colonies in October 2014, representing nearly 15.5 percent of the country’s 2.74 million colonies, responded to the survey.

A loss of 23.7 percent of managed honey bee colonies was reported for the 2013-2014 winter and 30.5 percent loss for the winter of 2012-2013. Previous surveys found winter losses of 21.9 percent in 2011-2012, 30 percent in 2010-2011, 33.8 percent in 2009-2010, about 29 percent in 2008-2009, about 36 percent in 2007-2008, and about 32 percent in 2006-2007. Annual colonies losses were 34.2 percent for 2013-14, 45 percent for 2012-2013, 28.9 percent for 2011-2012, and 36.4 percent for 2010-2011.

This survey was largely supported by a grant from USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which also provides the majority of funding for the Bee Informed Partnership.

A complete analysis of the survey data will be published later this year. The abstract for the analysis is at <http://beeinformed.org/results-categories/winter-loss-2014-2015/>.

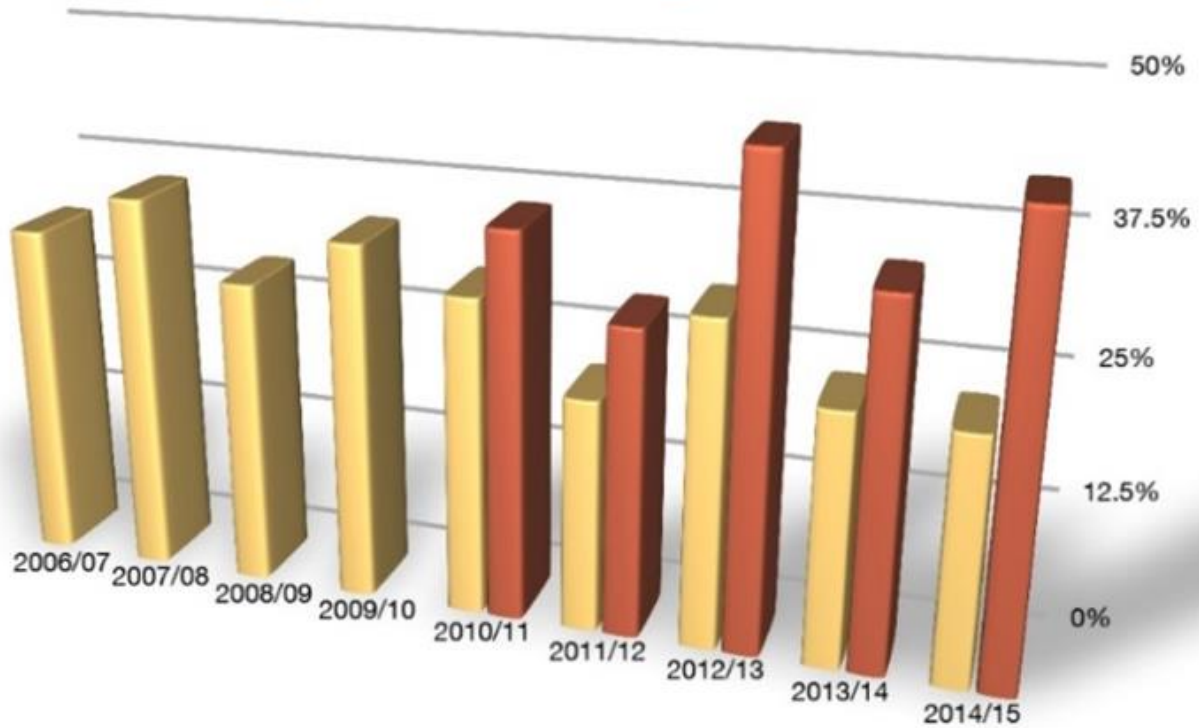
More information about ARS honey bee health research and CCD can be found at [www.ars.usda.gov/ccd](http://www.ars.usda.gov/ccd).



## Honey Bee Losses

Winter Loss

Annual Loss



### The Unfiltered Truth

Phill Remick

As our energetic bee friends ferry their highly coveted cargo of sweet nectar toward home, the transformation begins. Inside their tiny honey sacs, enzymes start the process of breaking down sugars as bees search for a cell to deposit their treasure deep inside the hive.

Let the evaporation procedure begin! With adequate evaporation provided by the constant fanning of wings, nectar will become honey--the food of the gods and us mortals, too. Honey bees know when the water content of the nectar is 18-20% and begin sealing the cell with wax, completing this complex task; evidently those miniature refractometers the hive just purchased with built in easy-to-read digital readouts are incredibly accurate and quite handy!

Raw/unfiltered honey contains tiny bits of wax, bee pollen and a few other 'extras' gourmet consumers cherish. This honey is never heated, because, when the heat is on, it modifies the composition of vitamins and minerals, kills the enzymes and can alter its taste. Allergy sufferers have seen the 'unfiltered' light and seek it out from their local keepers. By the way, so many beekeepers filter, filter and filter their honey until it appears as if it came right off the super market store shelf; so why bother, what's unique about producing honey like that? One local fellow's huge filtering device looks more like a triple still than a simple filtration system.

When you filter everything out, especially pollen, there is no way to determine where honey comes from. Why are we always altering a God given food? For example: Salt. Table salt has the 84 life sustaining minerals removed from it and the remaining ingredients are heated until they become toxic. Raw milk is boiled to death and has the healthy CLA cancer fighting fat removed. Why do we believe heating, filtering and watering down honey is the right thing to do? I believe it's because processed foods' focus is on beautiful visuals despite their lack of nutritional value.

In case you don't get out much, a few years back China exported to us a quantity of a product without pollen. One report said that when tested, several major chain stores selling this product, found no pollen in their honey, so what was the origin of it? We agree in this case, with the Natural News, "Honey void of pollen is an artificial, nutrition-void, watered-down scam."

There are at least one thousand types of honey worldwide, while in the United States, there are over 300 unique varieties. One of your apiaries could have five hives and provide a harvest of five different types of honey. Are you aware the honey on many grocery shelves is blended, watered down and filtered to crystal- clear clarity, so that REGARDLESS OF WHAT STORE YOU VISIT NATIONWIDE, IT ALL LOOKS AND TASTES THE SAME?

Beekeepers use a variety of filters. An 80 micron filter removes most particles in honey, and a 600 micron would leave things like granules or dust behind. In France regulations don't allow filtering honey more than 80 microns, this usually is adequate for most purposes. Many prefer the 200 micron filter.

Dark Manuka honey from New Zealand (which prides itself on being very organic) is packed with a multitude of medicinal antibacterial attributes (that are NOT filtered out!)

In the United States, some of the darker medicinal honeys are the Southwest's tamarisk honey and California's eucalyptus honey, which usually are raw and unfiltered.

If you want a product that is in demand for its coming from a hive rather than a boiling and filtering factory, then do minimal filtering.

People are becoming more aware that the less their food is 'processed', the better it is for them. Celebrate the incredible harvest of honey from your hives by keeping it in as natural state as possible, rather than emulating the grocery store honey look. Not only will you cultivate a following of grateful people, but you will show that what the bee produces does not need much intervention from man to be perfect.

Phill Remick is a former commercial beekeeper who teaches beekeeping classes, offers year round apiary troubleshooting, hive management and sells beekeeping supplies near Albuquerque, NM. Contact him at [www. NewBeeRescue.com](http://www.NewBeeRescue.com)

**The 2015 NCSBA Summer Conference will be held at the beautiful Lake Junaluska Conference Center in Lake Junaluska, NC. The dates are July 9, 10, and 11th. The event is being hosted by the Haywood County Beekeepers.**

- **Registration will begin at 10:00 am on Thursday, July 9**
- **Meeting will start at 1:00 pm Thursday in the auditorium.**
- **Meeting will adjourn on Saturday at 3:00 pm**
- **Vendors may start set up at noon, Thursday**
- **Certified, Journeyman, and Master Certification testing will be available on Thur from 9-12 or Friday from 12-3.**
- **Attendees are responsible for hotel and food reservations**
- **The cut-off for hotel & food is JUNE 08, 2015**
- **If you wish to come early or stay till Sunday, the group rate is available Wednesday and Saturday nights, if Lake Junaluska has space available.**

Make all Hotel & Food reservations thru Lake Junaluska, Phone- 800-222-4930  
or at their reservation

website: <https://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?groupID=1335361&hotelID=77715>

- Terrace Hotel, (hotel and food ticket ) – \$ 109.00 + food ticket each person, \$33.00 + optional \$22.00
- Lambuth Inn \$ 89.00 (food ticket optional—costs are \$ 33.00 and \$ 22.00)
- Lake side Lodge — \$ 69.00 ( food ticket optional—costs are \$ 33.00 and \$ 22.00)
- Lake Junaluska Apartments \$59.00 (food ticket optional—costs are \$ 33.00 and \$ 22.00)
- Campgrounds Apt \$ 75.00 (food ticket optional—costs are \$ 33.00 and \$22.00)

**\*Note:** Food ticket-\$33.00 is Thursday dinner + Friday breakfast, & Lunch  
Optional food ticket is Saturday breakfast and lunch

**Website:** [www.gastonbee.org](http://www.gastonbee.org)

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/gastoncountybees>

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