

# National Honey Bee Health Survey

The National Honey Bee Health Survey, sponsored by USDA and the Bee Informed Partnership, began several years ago to document the presence or absence of bee diseases, parasites and pests of honey bees. The Survey also samples pollen for the presence of over 174 pesticides. Colorado has taken part in the survey since 2011 and the data we are collecting is helping us to understand the major issues facing honeybee health. CDA is committed to continue to participate in the National Honeybee Health Survey, to further our understanding and strengthen the data so that we can make meaningful decisions toward protecting the future of pollinators in the State.

49 Colorado beekeepers from across the State in Alamosa, Arapahoe, Boulder, Delta, Denver, Dolores, Eagle, El Paso, Fremont, Garfield, Jefferson, Kit Carson, Larimer, Montrose, Mesa and Pueblo Counties have participated in the study. Samples of bees, larvae and pollen were collected by CDA inspectors and sent to the Beltsville Bee Lab in Maryland.

Varroa mite, considered to be honeybee enemy number one, was present in 80% of the hives sampled to date. Varroa mites are parasitic animals that feed on the hemolymph (blood) of bees and vectors bee viruses. 95% of all the honeybee colonies sampled contained at least one of the four viruses vectored by Varroa mite.

4 previously undetected viruses were identified:

Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus (IAPV)

Kashmir Virus

Chronic Bee virus

Acute Bee Paralysis Virus (ABPV)

A honeybee pathogen called *Nosema ceranae* was also present. *Nosema* causes diarrhea in honeybees and was found in 43% of the hives sampled in Colorado.

The most common types of pesticides found nationally and in Colorado are pesticides used by beekeepers to treat Varroa mites and *Nosema* disease.

Complete survey results for all 32 states that participated in the National Honey Bee Survey can be viewed at <https://beeinformed.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2013-2014-NHBS-Report.pdf>



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# Apiary Program Summary of Accomplishments

The Colorado Department of Agriculture promotes the health and well-being of all pollinators. Priority is placed in two areas based on legislative mandates:

- Pesticide application in a manner safe to the public and the environment as mandated by the Pesticide Applicators' Act and the Pesticide Act.
- Honeybee health as mandated by the Bee and Bee Products Act.



In the picture above a CDA Inspector sample hives for the National Honey-bee Health Survey



Apiary Registry by FieldWatch

This site is a voluntary communication tool that enables crop producers, beekeepers, and pesticide applicators to work together to protect speciality crops and apiary through use of mapping programs. It is not a substitute for any state regulatory requirements.

Communication + Cooperation + Collaboration  
=  
Successful Co-existence

## Pollinator Protection

CDA is in the process of updating the state's Managed Pollinator Protection Plan (MP3) to promote the health of managed and native pollinators and is working with advisory groups to complete the plan in 2016. The plan will include the following:

- Best Management Practices (BMP) for pesticide applicators, land owners, and beekeepers.
- Pollinator habitat enhancement information for farmers and urban dwellers.
- Continued pollinator protection awareness training for pesticide applicators.
- Partnerships with other state conservation and educational agencies.

## Pollinator Workgroup

*The Colorado Pollinator Workgroup has been established to represent pesticide applicators, beekeepers, land owners, pesticide registrants, and other interested stakeholders. The mission of the workgroup is to communicate, educate and cooperate by clarifying existing practices used by stakeholders to prevent pollinator decline, provide updates on new research and identify improved methods of communication.*

## State Apiary Program

*CDA is reviewing and auditing the Bee and Bee Products Act which mandates that the Department focus on pests and diseases affecting commercial and managed honeybee hives. Registration, funding and enforcement provisions for this act were rescinded in 1990. CDA is working with advisory groups to determine how the Bee and Bee Products Act can be made relevant to current pollinator health issues.*