

NATIONAL HONEY REPORT



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service
Fruit and Vegetable Programs
Market News Branch

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January 15, 2009

HONEY MARKET FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 2008

IN VOLUMES OF 10,000 POUNDS OR GREATER UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Prices paid to beekeepers for extracted, unprocessed honey in major producing states by packers, handlers & other large users, cents per pound, f.o.b. or delivered nearby, containers exchanged or returned, prompt delivery & payment unless otherwise stated.

- REPORT INCLUDES BOTH NEW AND OLD CROP HONEY -

(# Some in Small Lot --- +Some delayed payments or previous commitment)

ARKANSAS			
Soybean	light amber	\$1.25	
COLORADO			
Alfalfa	extra light amber	\$1.38	
FLORIDA			
Galberry	extra light amber	\$1.35	
Palmetto	extra light amber	\$1.35	
Wildflower	extra light amber	\$1.25	
DAKOTAS			
Clover	white	\$1.45	
MONTANA			
Clover	white	\$1.35	- \$1.45
WISCONSIN			
Clover	white	\$1.50	

Prices paid to Canadian Beekeepers for unprocessed, bulk honey by packers and importers in U. S. currency, f.o.b. shipping point, containers included unless otherwise stated. Duty and crossing charges extra. Cents per pound.

Province Not Reported

Mixed	white	\$1.44
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Prices paid to importers for bulk honey, duty paid, containers included, cents per pound, ex-dock or point of entry unless otherwise stated.

EAST COAST

Argentina

Mixed Flowers	white	\$1.47
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Mixed Flowers	extra light amber	\$1.20
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Brazil

Mixed Flowers	white	\$1.43
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Mixed Flowers	extra light amber	\$1.35
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Mixed Flowers	light amber	\$1.09	-	\$1.22
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COLONY, HONEY PLANT AND MARKET CONDITIONS DURING DECEMBER, 2008

APPALACHIAN DISTRICT (MD, PA, VA, WV): December was colder than normal for the most part with average precipitation. Many colonies were shipped to California for the almond pollination. Colonies still in this area went into the winter with less stores so monitoring is key.

ALABAMA: December in Alabama had below average temperatures most of the month and 5 to 7 inches of rainfall above the average. Honey bees have been stressed and there has been more feeding than usual. Bees were bringing in henbit pollen in mid-December. The weather, however, has been so inclement that bees have not been able to work. Most hobbyists were out of honey but larger beekeepers still have honey to sell. In South Alabama, enough pollen was being collected to start some brood rearing. There were reports of some colony losses.

ARIZONA: Temperatures were above normal during the first half of December, and below normal for the second half of the month. Temperatures statewide during the month ranged from a high of 81°F in Marana to a low of -19°F at the Grand Canyon. Precipitation levels were below normal levels for the first week of December, but were above normal levels for the remainder of the month, with precipitation reported at all 22 reporting stations in Arizona during the middle of December. Six of 22 reporting districts were above normal precipitation levels for the year. The main nectar and pollen sources were various citrus, alfalfa and cotton. Bee activity was limited during the month of December as beekeepers have been or continued to make preparations to move colonies to other locations for pollination of nut and fruit trees. Demand for honey remained good.

ARKANSAS: Pollen and nectar sources were from various trees. Colonies were in good condition. Temperatures were normal and rainfall was adequate. There was little activity with the exception of beekeepers planning to send bees to the almond fields. Bulk sales have good demand with generally good prices, with a few reports of slightly lower bulk prices. Retail demand continued strong and prices were firm.

CALIFORNIA: The month began with mostly dry and mild conditions. As the month progressed, significant rainfall was reported in Southern California and to a lesser extent in Northern California as well. Widespread fog and cool temperatures were reported in much of the Central Valley. A series of cold low pressure systems moved down the West Coast, producing heavy rain, unusually low snow levels and high winds across the state. A series of cold winter storms spread valley rain and mountain snow all across California. The mountains of the state reported impressive snow accumulations.

Both in-state and out-of-state honeybees were fed and over-wintered, and movement of bees into the state increased in anticipation of spring pollination. Beekeepers observed bees to determine if foragers were returning with nectar and pollen. They also checked hives for ants and skunk pests and took appropriate action to counter them and placed entrance reducers on hives to reduce the chance of mice over wintering there.

Bees fed on several winter-blooming Eucalyptus, including Red Ironbark and several varieties with cream to yellow-white blooms. Blue Gum eucalyptus blooms during the winter and is especially reliable in coastal areas and a bit less so in inland valleys such as the Sacramento and San Joaquin. Coyote Bush also starts to bloom at this time and continues through late January, and it is a minor source of both pollen and nectar for bees. Alder, found in riparian areas, begins blooming in mid-December and produces minor pollen and nectar to early February. Rosemary is yet another winter bloomer attractive to honeybees. And Strawberry Tree is beginning to bloom (since early November) and continues through January with heavy nectar flows.

COLORADO: Heavy snow, high winds, and extreme cold temps were the norm for much of Western Colorado, throughout December. However, areas of Eastern Colorado were bare and dry during the last week of the month. Honey extraction was complete and hives had been checked, treated and supplemented in preparation for the winter season. Bees staying in Colorado had been covered and protected for the winter onslaught. Others had been shipped to southern climates in preparation for the California almond pollination season.

FLORIDA: Florida had light supplies of pollen and nectar from a variety of minor sources at this time of year. The next major source of pollen and nectar will be citrus which is expected to begin in mid-January. Many hives were expected to be relocated to California from January through March for the almond pollination. Florida inspectors were busy inspecting and certifying hives to ease passage into California. Most hives were in good condition with no major reports of colony collapse disorder.

GEORGIA: Colonies around the state were in generally good condition as bees were wintering over in their hives. Alternating cool and warm temperatures with intermittent rainfall has some keeping an eye out for early activity during this period. Losses over the winter will not be determined until late January or February when the weather warms up and the bees begin showing some activity. Any new information regarding decline in populations will be reported at that time. Very little feeding was necessary until the Red Maple blossoms appear early in the New Year.

IDAHO: Most of the State enjoyed a wonderful "Indian Summer" throughout most of the fall months. December, however, saw the last of the good weather. Idaho was hit hard with heavy snowfall; record amounts fell through much of the State from the Nevada border to the Canadian Line. The panhandle received record amounts of snow over the week of Christmas. Heavy snows and high winds closed roads and created havoc for beekeepers trying to keep tabs on bee yards. Idaho even had a stretch of extreme cold temperatures to deal with in mid-December prior to Christmas. Bees, for the most part, are either in potato storages, in bee yards covered by tarps or in warm weather states. However, most of those warm weather states have had extreme winter storms to contend with. Southern Nevada & California particularly have had heavy snow fall in December. Luckily, for Idaho bees, warm temperatures returned and melted most of the snow rapidly. Most of the Idaho bees have been checked, treated and supplemented in preparation for the winter season.

ILLINOIS: The Honeybees had been in a tight cluster staying warm and consuming very little food since the first of the month. Temperatures below freezing and in the teens had been common throughout the state. Snowfall was very light in the central and southern regions while the northern section reported as much as 8 inches of snowfall in Oak Brook, a suburb of Chicago in northern Illinois. Beekeepers had been inspecting their hives closer than in past winters due to last winter's heavy losses attributed to Colony Collapse Disorder. Beekeepers have reported few hive losses so far this winter. Honey sales continued to be good due to holiday baking demand. Prices were steady.

INDIANA: In December, daytime temperatures had fallen into the teens and overnight temperatures were in the teens in southern sections and single digits in northern Indiana. Beekeepers had reported this winter has been normal thus far. In northern parts of the state beekeepers reported colonies making a few cleansing flights. Colonies were in a tight cluster and in good condition. Keepers monitored their hives this season carefully as last winter Colony Collapse Disorder resulted in 50-70 % losses in some colonies. Northern sections received some heavy amounts of snowfall while central and southern sections had received about 2-5 inches for the period. Honey sales were good due to holiday demand. Bulk sales were reported slow as there was very little remaining in the hands of the beekeepers.

IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA: Adverse climatic conditions continued into December as temperatures dipped 4°F below normal on the average. Precipitation was above average, however. Most beekeepers have finished winterizing colonies and were busy attending meetings, seminars and classes. Orders for bees were being taken for Spring deliveries and prices were expected to be above last season's. New pesticide time sprayings were being proposed.

KENTUCKY: Not Available at Time of Release.

LOUISIANA: Pollen and nectar sources were from various trees. Condition of colonies ranged from generally good to poor towards the end of the month. Temperatures have been normal and rainfall was adequate. Supply and demand were good.

MICHIGAN: Beekeepers continued readying their hives for winter, by checking colonies for mite problems as well as assessing feeding conditions. Feed has been supplemented on an as-needed basis. Bees have been able to take some cleansing flights during the past month. Most migrant beekeepers in the state have already moved their hives to the southeastern United States for pollinations. Demand for honey remained good.

MINNESOTA: Heavy snow, extreme cold, and high winds were felt through much of the state during December. Most beekeepers had already made the rounds of their bee colonies. Honey extraction was complete and hives have been checked, treated and supplemented in preparation for the winter season. Bees staying in Minnesota for the winter have been covered and protected. Others had been shipped to southern climates in preparation for the California almond pollination season.

MISSISSIPPI: Colonies appeared to be in very good condition overall according to beekeepers. Very little feeding was necessary at this time. However, some were feeding old honey to keep bees sustained until the Red Maple blossoms appear early next year. No losses have been noticeable since last September and will not be determined until after February when the hives show activity. Temperatures have alternated between warm and cold days with excess moisture from rain clearing before each new storm arrives keeping conditions about normal this time of year for the bees.

MONTANA: Montana received normal amounts of rain and snow in all areas during the month of December, and temperatures were also normal for the season. Keepers reported their homebound colonies to be in good condition. Trips to check on the security and provide supplement food to colonies wintering over in California were made in December, with the anticipation of beginning to move those colonies into almond groves late in January. Bee drop out or losses were noted to be within expected amounts. It was noted that at the present time the thought is that plenty of bees are said to be wintering in California to cover the upcoming almond pollination.

NEW ENGLAND: December brought cold, seasonal temperatures to New England with precipitation mainly from snowfall, resulting in high moisture levels for the entire region. Early December weather was erratic with on and off cold and warm weather, whereby the bees early on had a chance to reorganize themselves, haul out the dead, and go on cleansing flights. Many keepers reported finding drones still in their hives as late as Halloween. Thus, the “girls” were very late this year in evicting the drones. If the weather pattern stays cold it won’t hurt the bees as long as the hives have good ventilation. Keepers have registered early colony losses presumably due to low cluster size, low stores, and erratic temperatures. Steady cold weather lowers the rate at which honey bees consume honey stores. In New England the average consumption is about 60 lbs of honey throughout the winter. Keepers have closed up their hives for the winter. They have been checking colonies for ample supplies of honey for over wintering. Colonies were being fed as needed.

Keepers report seeing clustering just under the inter cover. However, clusters were tight enough to keep the bees safe. Many keepers have noticed a lot of mice activity in late fall and some reported significant hive beetle problems. Overall, though, beekeepers report that colonies seem to be in good condition and some claim their colonies are in better condition than at the same time last year. The improved health is due to regular and aggressive mite treatments. Many keepers have recently put their sticky boards in, under the screen bottoms as well as installing their mouse guards.

Keepers have reported that they have already received orders for spring packaged bees and queens. Keepers are occupied at building, repairing, and maintenance of equipment, and arranging for bee schools, workshops, seasonal fairs, reviewing club by-laws and putting together various schedules and reports as this is the “down” season for beekeeping. Some regional keepers have been in brain storming sessions developing strategies for creating new markets and products.

The supply and demand for local honey and wax remained good with prices generally unchanged.

NEW YORK: Beekeepers continued readying their hives for the winter. Beekeepers have been checking for mites and feeding conditions, and have been supplementing feed where needed. Most migrant beekeepers across New York have already relocated their hives to Florida and other southeastern states for pollinations. Demand for honey remained good.

NORTH CAROLINA: By the end of December, the U.S. Drought Monitor officially declared Charlotte-Mecklenburg and most of North Carolina out of the drought for the first time since March 2007. However, 28 counties west of Charlotte continue to experience dry conditions. Even though reservoirs and stream flows are improving, groundwater still hasn’t recovered fully from the drought. Wells in Davie and Rowan counties are in the lowest 25 percent of their historic levels. Water conservation remains a top priority in the state and when the General Assembly convenes in January water policy will be an issue to be addressed. Below normal precipitation for the Carolinas through March has been predicted by federal forecasters. Beekeepers are being cautioned to check for pest problems and watch their stores. At this time of year, only honey or sugar water is recommended for feeding. Bee schools are being offered to the public by local chapters of the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association and the Extension Service during the months of January and February. Club meetings and bee schools can help with planning for spring buildup. Honey sales during the holidays were excellent for available supplies.

NORTH & SOUTH DAKOTA: Activity was very light as bees were set for overwintering. Some have gone South or to California for the winter, and some are being overwintered in potato sheds in Idaho. Some are busy working on repairs and other winter chores.

OHIO: Beekeepers continued to prepare their hives for the winter. Beekeepers have been checking colonies for mites, as well as feeding conditions, and have supplemented feed where needed. Some bees have been making cleansing flights. Most migrant beekeepers in Ohio have already relocated or were making preparations to relocate their hives to Florida and other southeastern states for pollinations. Demand for honey has been good.

OKLAHOMA: Pollen and nectar sources were from various trees. Conditions of the colonies were generally good. Temperatures have been normal and rainfall was adequate. Supply and demand was fair.

OREGON: Not Available at Time of Release.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Not Available at Time of Release.

TENNESSEE: Moderate weather in December allowed flight most days. However, there were few sources available for pollen or nectar. Supplies of honey were low and feeding was necessary in certain parts of the state. Colony losses continued to be very light.

TEXAS: Pollen and nectar sources were from various trees, and some beekeepers were feeding. Colonies were not building up as needed with small clusters all month long. Weather conditions varied from hot to warm to freezing with very little rainfall and no honey production. Honey demand continued strong. Higher prices on bulk level were reported due to insufficient supply.

UTAH: Winter came to Utah with a vengeance in December this year. The weather made it difficult to move some bees to warmer climates. It was also difficult for beekeepers in the state to get to bee yards to check on colonies. Even, St. George, Utah, the tropical Zion of the State had snow the week of Christmas. Most of Utah's bees have been checked, treated and supplemented in preparation for the winter season. Utah beekeepers reported the usual concern for mites.

WASHINGTON: The winter started off unseasonably cold but has returned up to normal. Precipitation was also a bit light in December but picked up late in the month with several heavy snowfalls. Colonies were all in their winter locations leaving beekeepers to work on repairs and other winter activities.

WISCONSIN: After a dismal winter of 2007, beekeepers were hopeful this winter of 2008 and early 2009 that overwintering would improve. Beekeepers monitored their colonies much more closely after last year's losses of 50-70% attributed to CCD. Most of the beekeepers reported losses near normal as of mid-December. Colonies had very few cleansing flights due to winds and temperatures in the teens and low single digits. Near the end of the month, southern Wisconsin had what meteorologist's referred to as a "parade of weather systems" which dumped approximately one foot or more of snow between December 17th and 25th. Honey retail sales continued good due to holiday baking. Bulk honey movement was slow.

U.S Exports of Honey By Country, Quantity, and Value

	November 2008		Year to Date	
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars
COMB & NATURAL HONEY PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE - - -				
Aruba	1,461	7,179	6,375	30,697
Bahamas; The	1,311	7,067	1,311	7,067
Barbados	0	0	4,253	22,710
Bermuda	0	0	4,354	25,158
Cambodia	0	0	724	3,958
Cayman Islands	0	0	505	2,523
China; Peoples Republic of	5,105	21,183	43,409	190,051
Costa Rica	1,638	3,977	1,638	3,977
Germany	0	0	2,404	5,836
Guatemala	13,456	32,520	13,456	32,520
Guyana	0	0	1,415	9,469
Honduras	0	0	430	3,455
Hong Kong	0	0	19,441	53,353
Iceland	0	0	725	7,975
India	0	0	1,685	6,514
Indonesia	1,959	9,230	2,514	12,184
Japan	5,728	25,876	117,799	460,009
Korea; Republic of	37,134	138,188	188,864	641,639
Kuwait	1,703	5,128	92,558	455,401
Libya	0	0	16,201	52,609
Malaysia	14,572	35,370	62,662	150,062
Netherlands	0	0	2,268	10,180
Netherlands Antilles (exc. Aruba)	0	0	823	2,989
New Zealand (exc. Cook; Niue; & Tokelau)	0	0	1,586	3,850
Pakistan	0	0	14,623	68,896
Panama	2,610	13,662	5,705	30,059
Philippines	0	0	89,973	435,641
Qatar	0	0	2,637	9,353
Saudi Arabia	0	0	65,044	320,782
Singapore	0	0	9,923	24,086
Taiwan	1,599	3,882	34,685	115,655
United Arab Emirates	0	0	101,004	453,055
United Kingdom	1,349	3,275	1,349	3,275
Vietnam	0	0	57,591	112,743
Yemen	59,757	152,781	236,329	694,616
SUBTOTAL	149,382	459,318	1,206,263	4,462,347

	November 2008		Year to Date	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
	Kilograms	Dollars	Kilograms	Dollars
NATURAL HONEY, NOT ELSEWHERE INDICATED OR SPECIFIED - - -				
Antigua and Barbuda	0	0	31,815	86,050
Aruba	0	0	1,222	2,966
Australia	0	0	56,025	144,257
Bahamas; The	0	0	12,443	39,361
Bahrain	0	0	22,255	54,016
Barbados	865	4,555	4,372	20,355
Belgium	0	0	22,978	65,410
Belize	0	0	20,948	50,845
Bermuda	0	0	1,161	6,576
Brazil	0	0	1,960	3,189
Brunei	0	0	108,345	269,075
Cambodia	0	0	1,131	5,683
Canada	62,191	232,566	596,711	2,175,035
Cayman Islands	0	0	2,983	13,843
China; Peoples Republic of	751	9,298	14,315	47,202
Colombia	0	0	680	2,916
Costa Rica	0	0	5,008	14,794
Guatemala	0	0	29,691	60,320
Hong Kong	7,239	24,199	32,521	121,263
India	0	0	29,707	66,299
Indonesia	0	0	142,534	417,432
Israel	254,471	921,622	1,193,435	4,126,828
Jamaica	0	0	943	2,640
Japan	0	0	168,789	442,097
Korea; Republic of	0	0	35,983	90,694
Kuwait	0	0	16,289	78,087
Malaysia	0	0	52,758	111,731
Netherlands	680	3,285	4,397	12,374
Pakistan	0	0	25,975	67,978
Panama	0	0	1,552	3,766
Philippines	0	0	32,084	149,701
Saudi Arabia	0	0	98,818	355,151
Singapore	723	3,960	20,851	52,812
South Africa; Republic of	0	0	20,000	74,450
Taiwan	0	0	6,339	19,165
Thailand	13,859	33,638	70,621	202,898
United Arab Emirates	0	0	771	3,467
Venezuela	0	0	3,629	8,346
Vietnam	1,843	7,450	5,472	26,688
Yemen	0	0	1,000	3,000
SUBTOTAL	342,622	1,240,573	2,898,511	9,498,760
GRAND TOTAL	492,004	1,699,891	4,104,774	13,961,107

U.S Imports of Honey By Country, Quantity, and Value

	November 2008			Year to Date		
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars
WHITE HONEY – NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE - - -						
Argentina	57,350	167,720	170,521	2,536,229	7,375,556	7,605,685
Australia	0	0	0	19,499	58,497	60,497
Austria	0	0	0	927	5,933	6,149
Brazil	37,240	99,070	103,832	642,006	1,685,938	1,776,446
Canada	1,092,109	3,295,232	3,308,451	13,913,815	40,031,691	40,202,931
China; Peoples Republic of	0	0	0	3,090,767	1,363,857	1,895,807
Egypt	0	0	0	2,040	5,630	5,632
India	197,219	488,976	529,176	4,951,455	10,025,368	10,781,300
Indonesia	0	0	0	1,547,150	2,520,196	2,657,869
Italy	0	0	0	10,407	36,385	38,787
Japan	0	0	0	30,563	105,818	116,603
Malaysia	0	0	0	964,860	1,340,237	1,518,187
Mexico	0	0	0	149,794	432,286	441,250
Mongolia	0	0	0	18,166	22,049	27,249
New Zealand (exc. Cook; Niue; & Tokelau)	0	0	0	4,200	30,230	35,716
Poland	0	0	0	819	7,340	7,341
Russian Federation	953	3,028	3,194	5,369	17,484	17,651
Taiwan	0	0	0	74,400	104,160	114,592
Thailand	0	0	0	572,480	471,948	548,658
Turkey	0	0	0	38,610	111,970	114,470
United Kingdom	0	0	0	8,746	108,992	111,802
Uruguay	0	0	0	57,377	166,393	172,393
Vietnam	0	0	0	360,150	678,724	738,844
SUBTOTAL	1,384,871	4,054,026	4,115,174	28,999,829	66,706,682	68,995,859

EXTRA LIGHT AMBER HONEY – NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE - - -

Argentina	302,271	879,203	912,532	6,380,407	18,644,224	19,158,604
Brazil	74,760	189,080	200,211	3,169,543	7,642,569	7,992,865
Cambodia	0	0	0	71,920	109,318	119,318
Canada	0	0	0	355,819	1,031,869	1,035,877
China; Peoples Republic of	37,120	18,560	25,360	8,083,426	4,061,234	5,371,254
Germany	0	0	0	18,517	34,256	34,822
India	0	0	0	2,058,376	4,092,682	4,339,659
Indonesia	0	0	0	228,520	362,877	381,877
Italy	3,688	6,504	8,704	7,664	16,334	20,734
Malaysia	223,200	332,715	377,665	2,137,650	3,176,721	3,587,796
Mexico	0	0	0	292,767	818,380	835,662
Mongolia	0	0	0	254,324	375,491	386,048
Pakistan	38,000	83,220	90,406	304,000	598,095	636,960
Russian Federation	0	0	0	2,625,950	3,833,777	4,041,589
Singapore	0	0	0	269,250	363,488	393,488
Taiwan	76,560	118,668	131,461	727,320	1,144,572	1,252,356
Ukraine	0	0	0	18,850	50,895	52,895
Uruguay	0	0	0	77,106	222,212	230,144
Vietnam	0	0	0	2,018,480	3,733,288	4,033,027
SUBTOTAL	755,599	1,627,950	1,746,339	29,099,889	50,312,282	53,904,975

	November 2008			Year to Date		
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars
LIGHT AMBER HONEY – NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE						
Argentina	0	0	0	720,881	2,068,689	2,126,720
Austria	0	0	0	949	2,786	2,959
Brazil	1,147,714	2,754,771	2,917,110	7,550,161	16,782,292	17,805,332
Bulgaria	2,814	4,062	4,673	3,358	6,942	7,843
Canada	0	0	0	246,426	724,583	727,806
Chile	0	0	0	4,989	64,049	65,823
China; Peoples Republic of	0	0	0	18,850	32,422	34,988
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	2,736	10,656	11,074
Germany	328	2,755	3,097	36,328	74,755	76,318
Greece	6,232	26,618	28,060	6,232	26,618	28,060
Hungary	0	0	0	4,182	17,944	18,644
India	109,108	291,559	304,335	5,091,012	10,466,306	11,054,357
Israel	0	0	0	80	2,304	2,804
Italy	315	4,957	5,066	69,178	130,309	138,830
Malaysia	0	0	0	557,370	828,224	944,249
Mexico	6,380	19,127	20,727	391,351	901,112	931,905
Mongolia	0	0	0	54,498	81,747	81,830
New Zealand (exc. Cook; Niue; & Tokelau)	3,100	38,445	41,945	57,734	186,517	196,516
Peru	7,974	50,396	51,847	23,557	132,471	136,252
Poland	0	0	0	1,631	19,806	19,905
Russian Federation	0	0	0	475,020	712,530	720,881
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	6,150	12,300	14,002
Spain	2,080	18,070	18,380	19,857	94,701	97,574
Taiwan	18,300	38,430	41,950	607,627	913,245	980,077
Thailand	0	0	0	289,800	391,140	429,370
United Kingdom	0	0	0	109	2,085	2,185
Uruguay	0	0	0	92,780	259,615	269,785
Venezuela	0	0	0	5,095	21,384	27,642
Vietnam	513,370	1,091,391	1,156,566	13,810,046	26,573,513	28,387,609
SUBTOTAL	1,817,715	4,340,581	4,593,756	30,147,987	61,541,045	65,341,340

NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED OR INDICATED HONEY ---

Argentina	0	0	0	115,987	360,879	372,974
Australia	142	4,830	5,008	73,060	348,588	384,704
Brazil	302,313	702,309	747,021	974,788	2,183,927	2,326,384
Bulgaria	0	0	0	1,733	8,518	9,135
Canada	267	3,150	3,180	289,468	754,370	755,343
China; Peoples Republic of	0	0	0	4,309	7,600	8,100
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	103,860	89,600	96,060
Egypt	0	0	0	816	2,805	2,806
France	0	0	0	2,994	12,286	13,926
Germany	0	0	0	394	3,797	4,117
Greece	763	4,576	4,828	1,166	7,177	7,569
Honduras	0	0	0	1,078	2,167	2,299
Hong Kong	0	0	0	4,686	11,868	11,973
India	57,600	82,944	91,944	652,800	940,032	1,040,032
Israel	0	0	0	2,505	9,244	9,409
Italy	776	6,353	6,514	3,743	33,913	35,522
Lithuania	0	0	0	13,440	60,480	63,980
Malaysia	0	0	0	40,824	44,400	51,135

	November 2008			Year to Date		
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars
NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED OR INDICATED HONEY – Cont'd						
Mexico	5,622	12,509	13,694	554,865	1,368,012	1,379,750
Moldova; Republic of	0	0	0	4,888	14,043	14,045
Morocco	0	0	0	6,420	17,488	20,328
New Zealand (exc. Cook; Niue; & Tokelau)	30,267	88,482	100,494	188,178	433,181	464,103
Poland	720	4,607	4,831	4,320	24,287	24,609
Russian Federation	0	0	0	2,253	4,655	4,667
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	650	2,349	5,349
Spain	0	0	0	10,412	58,777	60,777
Switzerland	625	7,343	7,848	21,531	183,769	192,825
Taiwan	0	0	0	71,673	128,733	137,084
Thailand	0	0	0	36,300	71,511	78,461
United Kingdom	0	0	0	75,908	133,876	135,876
Vietnam	0	0	0	333,619	606,645	668,498
SUBTOTAL	399,095	917,103	985,362	3,598,668	7,928,977	8,381,840

COMB AND RETAIL HONEY ---

Argentina	0	0	0	36,135	129,189	133,383
Australia	6,075	15,473	16,973	68,482	388,221	404,682
Austria	0	0	0	97,004	459,200	495,545
Brazil	8,267	31,870	32,654	51,840	176,729	181,257
Bulgaria	14,452	42,438	46,682	124,214	407,418	434,349
Cambodia	0	0	0	283,632	409,248	443,448
Canada	195,101	849,801	853,143	1,562,605	6,595,510	6,631,730
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	50,972	95,563	98,020
Egypt	0	0	0	2,847	11,865	12,580
Fiji	0	0	0	1,872	13,880	16,662
France	501	8,401	9,670	54,234	508,244	528,802
Georgia; Republic of	636	4,080	4,488	636	4,080	4,488
Germany	69,928	263,864	277,864	271,572	1,141,514	1,200,397
Greece	4,128	44,069	45,262	69,026	493,163	501,654
Hungary	0	0	0	58,768	138,774	155,678
India	669	2,080	2,197	298,885	683,326	734,407
Iran	0	0	0	4,717	10,197	11,489
Israel	0	0	0	24,610	109,192	114,341
Italy	793	10,340	10,665	24,533	144,402	152,824
Japan	0	0	0	4,514	7,961	8,226
Korea; Republic of	0	0	0	2,160	2,400	2,594
Lebanon	0	0	0	300	4,488	4,757
Lithuania	0	0	0	27,036	95,866	104,483
Mexico	0	0	0	792	5,793	5,799
Moldova; Republic of	0	0	0	5,588	25,864	28,452
Monaco	807	6,626	6,938	6,720	71,183	74,019
New Zealand (exc. Cook; Niue; & Tokelau)	15,742	41,296	43,035	323,762	1,062,916	1,098,956
Peru	0	0	0	3,026	18,070	19,082
Poland	2,354	17,415	18,536	30,244	93,380	98,561
Portugal	3,840	23,052	23,857	12,206	70,485	72,845
Russian Federation	0	0	0	37,720	175,488	193,005
Spain	0	0	0	7,785	38,680	41,754
Switzerland	9,982	43,274	45,590	77,564	481,834	518,418
Taiwan	497,640	890,740	965,720	2,271,796	3,989,101	4,302,851
Thailand	0	0	0	660	2,500	2,716
Turkey	0	0	0	15,138	61,530	64,938
Ukraine	450	6,350	6,985	26,246	78,868	86,762
United Kingdom	4,724	8,829	9,144	21,151	45,225	48,364
Vietnam	0	0	0	1,408,330	1,904,672	2,084,572
SUBTOTAL	836,089	2,309,998	2,419,403	7,369,322	20,156,019	21,116,890

	November 2008			Year to Date		
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars
FLAVORED HONEY - - -						
Argentina	0	0	0	7,429	32,170	33,372
Canada	0	0	0	78,912	169,989	170,353
China; Peoples Republic of	0	0	0	26,432	118,274	125,929
France	0	0	0	830	7,470	8,095
Germany	0	0	0	17,600	242,001	250,044
Italy	408	7,558	7,559	2,726	42,396	44,467
Japan	0	0	0	12,703	114,448	119,741
Korea; Republic of	765	4,921	5,100	20,544	103,802	112,098
Mexico	7,044	65,292	66,440	74,611	847,241	855,859
New Zealand (exc. Cook; Niue; & Tokelau)	0	0	0	22	2,132	2,320
Taiwan	0	0	0	580	2,174	2,332
Thailand	0	0	0	74,553	258,631	270,071
United Kingdom	0	0	0	227	15,077	16,658
SUBTOTAL	8,217	77,771	79,099	317,169	1,955,805	2,011,339
GRAND TOTAL	5,201,586	13,327,429	13,939,133	99,532,864	208,600,810	219,752,243

Source for U. S. Import and Export Data: U.S. Department of Commerce

2008 Honey Loan Summary Report
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency
Price-Support Loan Activity
As of January 15, 2009 – Honey in Pounds

Loans Made				Loans Outstanding		
State	Count Original	Quantity Original	Amount Original	Count Out	Quantity Out	Amount Out
AL	1	50,400.00	\$30,240.00	1	46,620.00	\$27,972.00
AZ	2	27,720.00	\$16,632.00	1	7,800.00	\$4,680.00
AR	6	113,585.00	\$68,151.00	6	113,585.00	\$68,151.00
CA	23	676,850.00	\$406,110.00	16	431,090.00	\$258,654.00
FL	3	96,200.00	\$57,720.00	3	96,200.00	\$57,720.00
GA	5	27,870.00	\$16,722.00			
ID	22	387,887.00	\$232,732.20	8	177,956.00	\$106,773.60
IA	10	898,320.00	\$538,992.00	9	892,740.00	\$535,644.00
KS	1	15,600.00	\$9,360.00	1	15,600.00	\$9,360.00
LA	4	24,160.00	\$14,496.00			
MI	10	368,224.00	\$220,934.40	9	328,845.00	\$197,307.00
MN	17	563,344.00	\$338,006.40	10	295,404.00	\$177,242.40
MS	1	36,000.00	\$21,600.00			
MT	79	3,543,691.00	\$2,126,214.60	63	2,899,684.00	\$1,739,810.39
NE	18	555,875.00	\$333,525.00	15	435,621.00	\$261,372.60
NY	3	60,650.00	\$36,390.00	3	60,050.00	\$36,030.00
ND	21	874,690.00	\$524,814.00	7	327,070.00	\$196,242.00
OR	6	260,160.00	\$156,096.00	5	207,040.00	\$124,224.00

SD	35	2,565,990.00	\$1,539,594.00	29	2,340,470.00	\$1,404,282.00
TN	2	18,750.00	\$11,250.00	2	14,649.00	\$8,789.40
TX	4	138,180.00	\$82,908.00	4	125,380.00	\$75,228.00
UT	4	111,240.00	\$66,744.00	4	111,240.00	\$66,744.00
WA	8	151,306.00	\$90,783.60	7	126,063.00	\$75,637.80
WI	3	53,420.00	\$32,052.00	3	53,420.00	\$32,052.00

2008 National Loan Totals

Loans Made			Loans Outstanding		
Count	Quantity	Amount	Count	Quantity	Amount
288	11,620,112.00	\$6,972,067.20	206	9,106,527.00	\$5,463,916.19

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Pollination Economics Survey 2008

by

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Since 1986 the Honey Bee Laboratory at Oregon State University has conducted an annual survey of pollination economics in the Pacific Northwest (PNW). The information from each year of the survey has been made available both regionally and nationally. The information has proved to be most useful to individual beekeepers who generate income from pollination rental, which is the primary source of income for the majority of commercial beekeepers in the PNW.

The use of managed honey bee colonies for commercial crop pollination remains the most important function of the PNW beekeeping industry. The vast and diverse agriculture of the region relies on a healthy and strong beekeeping industry to maintain optimum production. An enhanced knowledge of pollination economics is crucial to every beekeeper that enters into the world of commercial crop pollination. It is also important for those growers who contract honey bee colonies for managed pollination to understand the current economic conditions of the beekeeping industry.

The USDA National Agriculture Statistical Service estimates that there are 200,000 production honey bee colonies in the PNW. With these numbers there are some interesting hypothetical calculations that can be made. For instance, if all growers of crops that require or benefit from managed honey bee pollination in the PNW, were to rent 2 colonies for each acre of blooming crop (355,000 acres), the resulting pollination requirement would utilize 710,000 colony rentals. If we multiply the hypothetical rentals by the 2008 average colony rental fee (\$81⁷⁵) it results in a potential pollination rental income of more than 58 million dollars for PNW beekeepers. If we add to this the estimated 2008 California almond pollination income, available to PNW commercial beekeepers (\$29.5 million), we end up with a potential gross pollination rental income of 87 and a half million dollars. Another way to look at this is by asking the question, 'how much pollination income, under optimized conditions, should have been produced from one commercial honey bee colony in the year 2008?' For the PNW that figure is approximately \$437⁵⁰ per hive. Which is obviously unattainable, if for no other reason than the impossibility of one colony being sequentially utilized in all of the necessary cropping systems required to produce such a hypothetical per colony income.

Comparing the hypothetical PNW rental income (\$58 million) to the farm-gate value of the crops pollinated in the PNW (\$1.75 billion) shows that the money spent by growers to ensure adequate pollination is about 3% of the total crop value. This is an impressive illustration of what a remarkable bargain pollination rental is to the commercial agricultural industry of the PNW.

This year's survey continues to illustrate the critical reliance of PNW beekeepers on income generated from colony rentals. For 2008 the average commercial beekeeper reported receiving 68% of his or her annual operating gross from pollination rental, which is identical to that reported for the 2007 crop year. This percentage shows the dominance of pollination rental income to a PNW beekeeper's financial "health".

Recent increases in the average pollination rental fee have been strongly influenced by the dramatic rise in the pollination rental fees paid by California almond growers. In 2005 almond growers responded to a perceived shortage of colonies by dramatically increasing the price they were willing to pay for pollination; this has continued for the 2008 pollination season. The average almond pollination fee for 2008 was \$148¹⁵. This is a 86.5% increase from

the 2005 average (\$79⁴⁰) and a 7.8% increase from the average almond pollination fee paid in 2007 (\$137³⁵). Almond pollination is a target crop for nearly all commercial beekeepers in the Pacific Northwest and represents the beginning of the annual pollination season.

For 2008 the average pollination rental fee, computed from commercial colony rentals on all crops reported (including almonds), was \$81¹⁵. This is a 14.8% increase from the average pollination fee paid in 2007 (\$70⁶⁵) (see Table 1). Table 2 provides the average rental fees by crop and a comparison to the average fee received in 2007.

During the past ten years the average pollination rental fee has gone from \$32²⁵ (1999) to \$81¹⁵ (2008), an increase of 250%. It needs to be stressed that honey bee colony rental was for many decades, an underpaid service to the agricultural industry at-large. It is really only within the past decade that rental fees have begun to more accurately reflect the enormous value-added service of managed pollination. This is shown by the 440% increase in the average pollination fee during the last nineteen years; 1990 = \$18⁴⁰ to 2008 = \$81¹⁵.

Within the PNW, tree fruits (apples, pears and sweet cherries) have been and remain the dominant crop types for pollination income. In 2008 the combination of apples, pears and sweet cherries and accounted for 34% of all reported rentals and 18.5% of all reported pollination income. Paradoxically, the single most important crop for PNW beekeepers is grown in California, *i.e.*, almonds. Almonds were responsible for 36.6% of all rentals and 67% of all rental income in the 2008 survey (see Table 4). Almonds consistently have produced a high average pollination fee and for the past three years have displayed remarkable fee increases compared to the 2005 average fee of \$79⁴⁰: for 2006, \$129²⁰; for 2007, \$137³⁵; for 2008, \$148¹⁵.

In 2008 the combination of California almonds and PNW tree fruit accounted for 71% of all rentals and 85.5% of all pollination income, which illustrates the dominance and importance of these crops for a commercial PNW beekeeper (see Table 4). All other PNW cropping systems utilizing honey bee pollination contributed 14.5% of a beekeeper's gross pollination income in 2008.

In terms of acreage, apples are the largest crop grown in the PNW and this is reflected by the large number of reported rentals (19% of all rentals and 11% of the total reported rental income).

Berry crops (blackberries, Marion berries, Logan berries, raspberries), are late spring to early summer bloomers and most often copious nectar producers. The 2008 average pollination fee for these combined berry crops was \$30²⁵, a lower price than the average fee because beekeepers have an expectation that a honey crop will also be produced. The rental of colonies for blueberry pollination has been increasing in recent years due to more acreage in production. The average rental fee for blueberries in 2008 was \$36⁹⁰, somewhat higher than other berry crops due to the fact that there is little to no expectation of a surplus honey crop.

The average PNW commercial honey bee colony was rented 1.9 times in 2008 and this includes California almonds. This is a decrease from 2007 (2.5). This statistic has trended downwards since 1999 when the average number of rentals per colony was 2.8. Does this actually reflect the real world situation? Are commercial beekeepers concentrating on almonds and PNW tree fruit (which historically provide the major sources of pollination income) and reducing the number of colonies involved in minor crop pollination? Following almond pollination, are colonies being shifted away from pollination to concentrate on honey production? At this time our data are not able to provide reasonable answers to these questions.

For the 2008 pollination season, an average rental fee of \$81¹⁵, combined with an average of 1.9 pollination rentals per colony, results in an annual per colony pollination income of \$154²⁰. With the "average" commercial operation running 4,800 colonies, a hypothetical 2008 gross pollination income for the "average" commercial beekeeping operation in the PNW was \$740,000.

The combined colony numbers from those commercial beekeepers who responded to the 2008 survey, (57,616 hives), represent about 29% of the USDA's estimate of colony numbers in Oregon and Washington. Therefore, if we multiply the total reported pollination income (\$8,945,086) by a factor of 3.5, we have a ball park estimate of the pollination income generated by commercial beekeeping in the PNW in 2008, *i.e.*, a regional pollination income of approximately \$31,000,000. This is far more than the "estimates" assigned to the bee industry by agricultural economists, who, for reasons unexplained, usually do not even include pollination rental income in their evaluation of beekeeping economics. Pollination income in the PNW far exceeds the value of honey and wax sales for our regional beekeeping industry. Pollination rental income is frequently four to five times greater than honey and wax sales in any given year. This disparity between pollination income and combined honey/wax sales has increased dramatically, especially in the past few years, concurrent with the impressive rise in pollination rental fees

The 2008 survey asked commercial beekeepers to report the total number of full-time or full-time equivalent employees working for their operations. An interesting way to look at this question concerning the average number of full-time employees, is to ask the question "what is the colony equivalent", meaning, how many colonies are necessary in order to hire one full-time employee? That figure was very close to 1,500 colonies/employee in 2004 and 2005. In 2007 the "colony equivalent" was 1,125 hives per full-time employee, and for 2008 the reported "colony equivalent" is 870. This lower number would suggest that colonies are received more intensive management, which ultimately means healthier hives.

While colony income from pollination rental is a critical statistic, so therefore is the annual cost to maintain a healthy hive of honey bees. Numerous commercial beekeepers, who have over the years maintained accurate cost accounting records, have reported colony maintenance costs that are very reasonable relative to today's economy. The average annual hive maintenance cost was \$178 per colony for the year 2008. The range in individual responses was from a high of \$225/hive to a low of \$132/hive. This wide range suggests that beekeepers should try to be more precise in calculating their operational costs. If you can't answer the question of your operating cost on a *per colony basis*, you need to re-adjust your operational accounting.

For 2008 the average colony maintenance cost is once again higher than the average per colony pollination income. From the 2008 survey data, pollination income was \$154²⁰/colony and the colony maintenance cost was \$178; a difference of \$23⁸⁰ per colony. This illustrates that the net operational profit needs to be generated by sources of income outside of pollination rental, most importantly, honey production.

In interpreting the average pollination fee for an individual crop, it is important to recognize that the reliability of the “average” is strongly influenced by the number of reported rentals. The “average” for almonds should be considered very realistic because of the large number of beekeepers and rentals reported for this crop, and such is also the case for tree fruit in the PNW. For this year’s survey report, pollination rental averages for crops with fewer than 1,000 reported rentals, have been excluded from Table 2, but they have been included for computing the average pollination fee from all reported rentals.

It is important to remember that the data presented here represent the pollination rental situation of a hypothetical “average” commercial beekeeper in the Pacific Northwest. For individual beekeepers the survey results are most useful as benchmarks against which they should compare their individual operations. Let it be stressed again that all of these “projections” are only as accurate as the data provided by responding beekeepers. The projections also assume that the participating beekeepers collectively represent the mainstream of commercial beekeeping in the Pacific Northwest.

I wish to again thank all those beekeepers in Oregon and Washington who took the time to participate in the survey, which over the past 23 years, has generated the most accurate assessment of commercial pollination known in the U.S. I also offer sincere thanks to the Washington State Beekeepers’ Association for the funding support to continue this annual survey of PNW regional beekeeping economics.

Table 1. Average Pollination Fee 1999-2008

<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
32.25	32.85	33.65	36.40	36.45	38.65	51.30	73.85	70.65	81.15

Table 2. 2008 Average pollination fees as reported by 11 commercial beekeeping operations.

<u>Crop</u>	<u>No. Rentals</u>	<u>Avg. Fee</u>	<u>Fee +/-¹</u>
Pears	7,246	\$42 ³⁵	+3.9%
Cherries	9,334	\$42 ³⁵	0%
Apples	21,112	\$45 ⁴⁰	+5.8%
Berries ²	2,844	\$30 ²⁵	-11.9%
Blueberries	8,588	\$36 ⁹⁰	+3.4%
Cranberries	1,578	\$50 ⁰⁰	+12.6%
Vegetable seed	8,932	\$47 ³⁰	-16.9%
Clover seed ³	4,165	\$31 ¹⁵	-41.7%
Radish seed	1,002	\$35 ⁷⁵	0%
Watermelon	1,435	\$49 ²⁵	+33.8%
Meadowfoam	1,500	\$45 ³⁵	+3.6%
Almonds	40,385	\$148 ¹⁵	+7.8%

Average Pollination Fee = \$81¹⁵

¹% change from 2007

²Includes blackberries, raspberries, Marion berries, & Logan berries.

³Includes red & white clover as grown for seed.

Table 3. Average colony numbers, average rental fee per hive, and average annual rental income per hive for a hypothetical commercial beekeeping operation in the Pacific Northwest 1992-2008.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average No. Colonies</u>	<u>Average Rental Fee</u>	<u>Average Annual Rental Income per Colony</u>
1992	765	\$19 ²⁵	\$49 ⁷⁰
1993	990	\$22 ⁵⁰	\$62 ²⁵
1994	1,225	\$28 ¹⁰	\$78 ⁷⁰
1995	1,348	\$29 ⁶⁰	\$78 ¹⁵
1996	1,350	\$31 ⁵⁵	\$97 ⁵⁰
1997	1,504	\$31 ⁰⁵	\$92 ²⁰
1998	1,153	\$29 ⁶⁵	\$83 ⁰⁰
1999	2,058	\$32 ²⁵	\$89 ³⁰
2000	2,055	\$32 ⁸⁵	\$77 ⁴⁰
2001	3,168	\$33 ⁶⁵	\$64 ⁶⁰
2002	4,255	\$36 ⁴⁰	\$63 ⁷⁵
2003	2,612	\$36 ⁴⁵	\$86 ⁴⁰
2004	3,555	\$38 ⁶⁵	\$74 ⁶⁰
2005	2,055	\$51 ³⁰	\$112 ⁸⁵
2006	3,855	\$73 ⁸⁵	\$151 ¹⁰
2007	3,091	\$70 ⁶⁵	\$176 ⁶⁰
2008	4,800	\$81¹⁵	\$154²⁰