



Pollinator Stewardship Council

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Waiting for the Full Report on Bee Losses

The recent report, “National Honey Bee Loss Declines,” has many caveats which are not featured in media articles. The Bee Informed Partnership compiling the report states “This is a preliminary analysis.” The data they collect is provided voluntarily by beekeepers across the U.S. It is key to note this report reflects only 21.7% of the total 2.6 million colonies in the nation. This report reflects less than a quarter of the total managed bee colonies in the country. The beekeeping industry is comprised of backyard, side-liner, and commercial beekeepers with each category defined by the number of bee hives. If a majority of beekeepers reporting are backyard beekeepers with 1-10 hives that experience only an urban and suburban environment, their losses will be different compared to sideline and commercial beekeepers who travel around the state or the country pollinating crops, and exposing their bees to rural, and distinctly agricultural areas. The survey relies on beekeepers to voluntarily submit their information, and this report reflects less than a quarter of the total hives in the U.S.. The authors of the report

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The Pollinator Stewardship Council’s mission is to defend managed and native pollinators vital to a sustainable and affordable food supply from the adverse impact of pesticides.

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reiterate these are “preliminary results.” As all research, the full report will give us greater information in order to make an informed conclusion. Talking with beekeepers across the country, losses over the winter were high for beekeepers in the winter states, as the winter was much longer this year. In the southern states where many commercial bees reside beekeepers reported losses exacerbated by pathogens and pre-lethal pesticide exposure weakening bees. One beekeeper reported 60% losses in his commercial operation. Before claiming less national losses, the complete story will be revealed in the full report.