

**Office of the Director**

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June 30, 2023

The Honorable JB Pritzker  
Governor of Illinois  
Capitol Building  
Springfield, Illinois 62706-1150

Dear Governor Pritzker:

In accordance with Section 3 of the Illinois Bees and Apiaries Act [510 ILCS 20/3], the Illinois Department of Agriculture is directed to submit an annual apiary inspection report to the Governor and the Illinois State Beekeepers Association. The report contains the findings of the Department's inspections of apiaries across Illinois on a fiscal year basis.

Please find enclosed the fiscal year 2023 Apiary Inspection Annual Report. Do not hesitate to contact Brian Rennecker, Apiary Inspection Supervisor, if there are questions regarding the contents of the report.

Sincerely,



Jerry Costello II  
Director

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Enclosure

**Fiscal Year 2023 Apiary Inspection Annual Report**  
**Illinois Department of Agriculture**  
**(July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)**

The Illinois Department of Agriculture administers the Illinois Bees and Apiaries Act (Act). Department Apiary Inspectors examine honeybee colonies around the state for the issuance of moving permits, to monitor the health of the bee population, to help prevent the spread of diseases and pests of the honeybee and to provide advice on general honeybee management.

Beekeeping in Illinois continues to be a hobbyist endeavor with almost 89% of the beekeepers managing 10 colonies or less (Table 1). 38 beekeepers maintain 100 or more colonies in the state.

Beekeepers are required to register with the Department of Agriculture. As of the end of Fiscal Year 2023, 5,375 beekeepers were managing 36,469 colonies in 7,013 apiaries in Illinois (Table 2). The number of registered beekeepers has again increased. 520 beekeepers were newly registered during the fiscal year. The total number of registered beekeepers statewide has gradually increased each year since 2003. Table 3 lists the number of colonies and apiaries registered in each county in Illinois. Will County had the highest number of colonies with 2,890. Lake County and Cook County placed second and third with 2,833 and 2,271 colonies, respectively.

Colony inspection statistics for Fiscal Year 2023 and several previous years are included in Table 4. From July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 636 apiaries containing 7,277 colonies were visited. Of these colonies, 2,967 were actually opened and inspected. American Foulbrood Disease (AFB) was detected in only 3 colonies. The number of colonies infected with European Foulbrood (EFB) increased and Chalkbrood remained the same from Fiscal Year 2023.

Varroa mites continue to be found throughout the state. Inspection reports during the fiscal year indicated a decrease in varroa mite levels as compared to last year. This may be due in part to the randomness of inspections, the time of year inspections were made, environmental conditions, more effective treatments for varroa mite control and rotating miticides.

Reports from around the state indicated colony losses following the winter weather affected most beekeepers to some degree. Some lost most, or all, of their colonies, while some beekeepers had a minor loss. Also, interest in colonies for pollination continues to increase due to the lack of feral colonies and the realization of the importance of honeybee pollination.

Tracheal mites are not listed as a regulated parasite in the Illinois Bees and Apiaries Act and rules. However, examinations for tracheal mites can still be performed when requested. Tracheal mites were not discovered in any colonies in conjunction with Department apiary inspections for Fiscal Year 2023.

The small hive beetle (SHB) continues to be a problem in Illinois. Given the Department's inspections and input from the Industry, the SHB has spread most likely to all Illinois counties. In Fiscal year 2022 the IDOA found 703 colonies that contained the SHB, while in Fiscal Year 2023 633 colonies had SHB. Based upon our inspections in Fiscal Year 2023, we expected these numbers to be lower than reported. Beekeepers are using various control methods (e.g., traps, other non-chemical control methods) to manage the beetle. The Department continues to closely monitor the movement of the SHB across Illinois.

Department Apiary Inspectors encountered a few cases of overly aggressive bees during their inspections. Samples were collected and sent to the USDA laboratory in Tucson, Arizona for testing. All tests were negative for the presence of Africanized genes in those samples.

The Department and the Illinois State Beekeepers Association continue to encourage active communication between beekeepers and licensed pesticide applicators to accomplish the reduction of honeybee exposure to various pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, etc.). There have been some instances where honeybees have been exposed to these materials, at times with catastrophic impacts. Progress is being made with the needed communication.

Licensed pesticide applicators can continue to gain contact and locational information related to Illinois beekeepers on the Department's website through the FieldWatch internet site. In addition, beekeepers can register their colonies on the FieldWatch site. The Department encourages pesticide applicators to contact beekeepers well in advance of an application to allow them to take needed steps to protect his or her honeybee colonies. This is a voluntary process that does not guarantee the complete elimination of potential pesticide exposures to honeybee colonies. However, if the pesticide user community and beekeepers work together, these potential exposures can be greatly reduced.

**TABLE 1**  
**Distribution of Beekeeper Size in Illinois**

<b>Number of Colonies</b>	<b>Number of Beekeepers</b>	<b>Percentage of Beekeepers</b>
0	305	5.68
1-5	3,747	69.79
6-10	713	13.28
11-20	318	5.92
21-50	207	3.86
51-100	41	0.76
101-200	28	0.52
201-300	3	0.06
301-400	2	0.04
401-500	0	0.00
>500	5	0.09

These counts are based on the current Active status and not a specific State Fiscal Year due to the issue of renewals that can take place from Jan 1 through October 1. Also, because newly registered Owners are not required to renew following their first year, the inaccuracy would be compounded.

TABLE 2  
Illinois Beekeeper and Colony Statistics

<b>Number of Registered Beekeepers</b>	<b>Number of Apiaries</b>	<b>Number of Colonies</b>	<b>Colonies/Beekeepers</b>	<b>Colonies/Apiaries</b>
5,375	7,013	36,469	6.78	5.20

These counts are based on the current Active status and not a specific State Fiscal Year due to the issue of renewals that can take place from Jan 1 through October 1. Also, because newly registered Owners are not required to renew following their first year, the inaccuracy would be compounded.

**TABLE 3**  
**Number of Registered Apiaries and Colonies in Illinois Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b># of Apiaries</b>	<b># of Colonies</b>
Adams	94	405
Alexander	5	32
Bond	61	284
Boone	34	224
Brown	13	59
Bureau	59	487
Calhoun	14	61
Carroll	33	415
Cass	15	68
Champaign	146	436
Christian	47	166
Clark	49	351
Clay	14	330
Clinton	102	464
Coles	58	207
Cook	751	2271
Crawford	35	135
Cumberland	21	72
DeKalb	43	172
De Witt	39	295
Douglas	21	72
DuPage	282	1070
Edgar	40	122

<b>County</b>	<b># of Apiaries</b>	<b># of Colonies</b>
Edwards	5	15
Effingham	26	154
Fayette	43	320
Ford	28	75
Franklin	49	300
Fulton	47	469
Gallatin	2	3
Greene	26	103
Grundy	35	225
Hamilton	15	100
Hancock	44	168
Hardin	5	21
Henderson	22	111
Henry	61	206
Iroquois	58	338
Jackson	72	380
Jasper	45	465
Jefferson	38	148
Jersey	51	241
Jo Daviess	38	181
Johnson	13	47
Kane	192	1331
Kankakee	81	601
Kendall	54	250
Knox	46	233
Lake	481	2833

<b>County</b>	<b># of Apiaries</b>	<b># of Colonies</b>
LaSalle	114	425
Lawrence	25	199
Lee	34	148
Livingston	45	128
Logan	32	138
McDonough	39	145
McHenry	279	1915
McLean	150	592
Macon	59	188
Macoupin	118	368
Madison	263	994
Marion	66	374
Marshall	21	143
Mason	28	156
Massac	16	68
Menard	48	298
Mercer	36	105
Monroe	49	202
Montgomery	65	279
Morgan	73	212
Moultrie	28	122
Ogle	55	338
Peoria	139	441
Perry	48	288
Piatt	34	117
Pike	24	93



<b>County</b>	<b># of Apiaries</b>	<b># of Colonies</b>
Pope	11	30
Pulaski	2	4
Putnam	28	174
Randolph	43	219
Richland	28	134
Rock Island	52	244
St. Clair	179	607
Saline	23	215
Sangamon	233	882
Schuyler	13	71
Scott	8	31
Shelby	58	231
Stark	12	30
Stephenson	33	172
Tazewell	84	352
Union	31	1060
Vermilion	77	319
Wabash	8	50
Warren	27	82
Washington	38	118
Wayne	45	436
White	15	128
Whiteside	52	364
Will	217	2890
Williamson	74	362
Winnebago	100	942

<b>County</b>	<b># of Apiaries</b>	<b># of Colonies</b>
Woodford	80	330

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TABLE 4

## Illinois Apiary Inspection Statistics

SFY	# of Apiaries Inspected	Colonies in Apiaries Inspected	# of Colonies Examined	AFB		# of Colonies with EFB	# of Colonies w/Chalk Brood	Varroa Mite		# of Colonies w/Tracheal Mites
				# of Colonies	% of Colonies Examined			# of Colonies	% of Colonies Examined	
2023	636	7,277	2,967	3	0.10	91	2	104	3.51	0
2022	786	8,154	4,163	10	0.24	81	2	222	5.33	0
2021	762	9,280	4,622	2	0.04	101	3	276	5.97	0
2020	874	14,596	7,847	1	0.01	118	20	293	3.73	0
2019	817	15,314	7,413	0	0.00	110	18	540	7.28	0
2018	864	12,178	5,669	7	0.12	74	32	585	10.32	0
2017	633	11,430	5,479	14	0.26	81	4	398	7.26	0
2016	897	13,611	5,301	33	0.62	131	13	546	10.30	0
2015	724	8,164	4,904	24	0.49	82	12	348	7.10	0
2014	565	6,546	3,496	15	0.43	91	16	362	10.35	0
2013	485	3,880	2,469	2	0.08	113	5	554	22.44	0
2012	404	2,923	2,082	17	0.82	45	5	394	18.92	2
2011	323	2,251	1,617	3	0.19	17	6	270	16.70	2
2010	404	2,676	1,987	8	0.40	35	28	483	24.31	10
2009	371	4,200	3,112	7	0.22	0	9	217	6.97	1
2008	307	2,018	1,471	12	0.82	3	10	111	7.55	1
2007	340	2,500	1,772	23	1.30	7	24	158	8.92	1
2006	323	2,563	1,836	35	1.91	1	15	144	7.84	0
2005	293	4,693	2,589	50	1.93	10	69	172	6.64	0
2004	218	4,627	1,678	36	2.15	1	33	54	3.22	0
2003	264	3,632	1,894	89	4.70	8	107	297	15.68	8
2002	218	2,651	1,462	32	2.19	0	46	142	9.71	0
2001	235	3,493	1,318	20	1.52	1	41	217	16.46	0