

There are an estimated 115,000 – 125,000 beekeepers in the United States.*

The vast majority are hobbyists with less than 25 hives. Commercial beekeepers are those with 300 or more hives. The number of U.S. honey bee colonies producing honey in 2013 was 2.64 million (based on beekeepers who manage five or more colonies), up 4% from 2012.*

Honeybees are popular with connoisseurs, farmers, fruit growers and mother nature. We not only owe the bees their valuable honey but as a busy pollinator of useful and wild plants they are very significant along with being an important link in many communities, Millions of acres of U.S. fruit, vegetable, oilseed and legume seed crops depend on insect pollination, which includes honey bees. According to a Cornell University study*, the increased production of 2010 agricultural crops as a result of honey bee pollination is valued at more than \$19 billion.



Working bees have to fly out around 40,000 times for 1 lbs. of honey and cover a flight distance of approximately 75,000 miles. On a good day the bees can collect several pounds of flower nectar. By nature, bees are "flowering continuously", visiting the same plant species repeatedly during their bloom.

This also means that they transfer the appropriate pollen to plants of the same type. Special pollination beekeepers drive from one field to another thus ensuring the pollination of certain crops, which also forms better fruit sets. The collection area of a single bee colony covers an area of approximately 20 square miles.

In addition to producing honey, honey bees produce beeswax and help pollinate agricultural crops, home gardens and wildlife habitat. The USDA has estimated that 80 percent of insect crop pollination is accomplished by honey bees.* Rich harvests, abundant growth and natural biodiversity depend heavily on bees and other insects. They secure the food base of many animal species.

*National Honey Board - <https://www.honey.com/>