



JB Pritzker, Governor  
John M. Sullivan, Director

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**Office of the Director**

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October 17, 2019

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 2019 Apiary Inspection Annual Report. Do not hesitate to contact Brian Rennecker, Acting Apiary Inspection Supervisor, if there are questions regarding the contents of the report.

Sincerely,

John M. Sullivan  
Director

Copy: Warren Goetsch, IDOA  
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Enclosure

**Fiscal Year 2019 Apiary Inspection Annual Report**  
**Illinois Department of Agriculture**  
**(July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019)**

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 76% of the beekeepers managing 10 colonies or less (Table 1). 33 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 2019, 4,551 beekeepers were managing 32,268 colonies in 6,202 apiaries in Illinois (Table 2). The number of registered beekeepers has again increased significantly. 527 beekeepers were newly registered during the fiscal year. The total number of registered beekeepers statewide has increased each year since 2003 and is the most registered since 1990. Table 3 lists the number of colonies and apiaries registered in each county in Illinois. Lake County had the highest number of colonies with 2,504. Will County and Cook County placed second and third, with 2,373 and 1,872 colonies, respectively.

Colony inspection statistics for Fiscal Year 2019 and several previous years are included in Table 4. From July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, 816 apiaries containing 15,313 colonies were visited. Of these colonies, 7,412 were actually opened and inspected. American Foulbrood Disease (AFB) was **not** detected in any colonies. This shows a significant decrease in the number of colonies infected with AFB as compared to 2018. The number of colonies infected with European Foulbrood (EFB) increased while the number of colonies with Chalkbrood decreased from Fiscal Year 2018.

Varroa mites continue to be found throughout the state. Inspection reports during the fiscal year indicated a large increase 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 2019.

The small hive beetle (SHB) continues to be a growing 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 2018, the IDOA found 676 colonies that contained the SHB, while in Fiscal Year 2019, 1,710 colonies had SHB. Based upon our Inspections to date in Fiscal Year 2020, we expect both of these numbers to be exceeded. 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 as of July 1, 2019**

<b>Number of Colonies</b>	<b>Number of Beekeepers</b>	<b>Percentage of Beekeepers</b>
0	235	5.15
1-5	3,228	70.77
6-10	582	12.76
11-20	275	6.03
21-50	168	3.68
51-100	40	0.88
101-200	23	0.50
201-300	2	0.04
301-400	1	0.02
401-500	0	0.00
>500	7	0.15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,561</b>	<b>100.0*</b>

\* May not total 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 2****Illinois Beekeeper and Colony Statistics from 2001 through 2019  
as of July 1 of each year.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Registered Beekeepers</b>	<b>Number of Apiaries</b>	<b>Number of Colonies</b>	<b>Colonies/ Beekeeper</b>	<b>Colonies/ Apiary</b>
2019	4,551	6,202	32,268	7.1	5.2
2018	4,308	6,000	30,017	7.0	5.0
2017	4,009	5,652	28,864	7.2	5.1
2016	3,522	5,136	25,339	7.2	4.9
2015	3,114	4,517	24,690	7.9	5.5
2014	2,766	4,023	26,004	9.4	6.5
2013	2,519	3,705	24,382	9.7	6.5
2012	1,825	2,849	21,231	11.6	7.5
2011	1,815	2,786	21,266	11.7	7.6
2010	1,631	2,565	20,547	12.6	8.0
2009	1,433	2,325	19,680	13.7	8.5
2008	1,366	2,303	19,556	14.3	8.5
2007	1,329	2,216	18,821	14.2	8.5
2006	1,264	2,157	20,217	16.0	9.4
2005	1,213	2,054	27,646	22.8	13.5
2004	1,141	1,940	19,572	17.2	10.1
2003	1,117	1,926	18,649	16.7	9.7
2002	1,107	1,914	17,963	16.3	9.4
2001	1,160	2,038	19,627	16.9	9.6

**TABLE 3****Number of Registered Apiaries and Colonies in Illinois Counties as of July 1, 2019**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b># OF APIARIES</b>	<b># OF COLONIES</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b># OF APIARIES</b>	<b># OF COLONIES</b>
Adams	82	434	Jefferson	26	212
Alexander	2	16	Jersey	40	165
Bond	68	319	JoDaviess	58	987
Boone	35	285	Johnson	12	52
Brown	8	33	Kane	205	1,281
Bureau	56	350	Kankakee	78	419
Calhoun	12	49	Kendall	40	168
Carroll	37	523	Knox	36	124
Cass	12	54	LaSalle	115	484
Champaign	124	411	Lake	427	2,504
Christian	45	155	Lawrence	13	91
Clark	53	237	Lee	36	120
Clay	10	570	Livingston	40	134
Clinton	103	382	Logan	38	139
Coles	73	417	Macon	50	134
Cook	574	1,872	Macoupin	99	313
Crawford	37	175	Madison	222	753
Cumberland	26	94	Marion	60	187
DeKalb	38	200	Marshall	12	96
DeWitt	35	227	Mason	26	77
Douglas	27	84	Massac	13	37
DuPage	276	1087	McDonough	29	122
Edgar	44	143	McHenry	207	1,678
Edwards	9	23	McLean	106	389
Effingham	31	149	Menard	35	140
Fayette	48	310	Mercer	36	97
Ford	11	36	Monroe	58	280
Franklin	49	313	Montgomery	65	252
Fulton	41	212	Morgan	47	140
Gallatin	2	10	Moultrie	37	184
Greene	20	88	Ogle	71	331
Grundy	24	191	Peoria	109	328
Hamilton	11	631	Perry	30	227
Hancock	41	209	Piatt	29	83
Hardin	2	20	Pike	24	133
Henderson	21	108	Pope	5	15
Henry	56	167	Pulaski	3	2
Iroquois	55	275	Putnam	18	59
Jackson	60	379	Randolph	29	157
Jasper	45	284	Richland	27	85

**TABLE 4**  
**Illinois Apiary Inspection Statistics**

<b>SFY</b>	<b># of Apiaries Inspected</b>	<b>Colonies in Apiaries Inspected</b>	<b># of Colonies Examined</b>	<b>AFB</b>		<b># of Colonies with EFB</b>	<b># of Colonies w/Chalk Brood</b>	<b>Varroa Mite</b>		<b># of Colonies w/Tracheal Mites</b>
				<b># of Colonies</b>	<b>% of Colonies Examined</b>			<b># of Colonies</b>	<b>% of Colonies Examined</b>	
2019	816	15,313	7,412	0	0.00	110	18	540	7.29	0