NATIONAL HONEY REPORT

United States Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service
Fruit and Vegetable Programs
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HONEY MARKET FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL, 2013
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)

DAKOTAS				
Canola	White	$2.10		
Clover	White	$1.86	-	$2.05
Clover	Extra Light Amber	$1.95	-	$2.05
FLORIDA				
Brazilian Pepper	Extra Light Amber	$1.50	-	$1.80
Holly	Light Amber	$1.85		
Orange	White	$2.00	-	$2.10
Orange	Extra Light Amber	$1.85	-	$1.95
Orange	Light Amber	$2.15		
IOWA				
Wildflowers	White	$2.00		
MICHIGAN				
Wildflower	White	$2.00		
Wildflower	Extra Light Amber	$2.00		
MINNESOTA				
Alfalfa	White	$2.03		
Basswood	Extra Light Amber	$2.00		
Canola	White	$2.05		
Clover	White	$2.05		
Wildflower	Extra Light Amber	$2.05		
MONTANA				
Alfalfa	Extra Light Amber	$1.95		
Clover	White	$1.90	-	$2.10
NEBRASKA				
Canola	White	$2.00		
Clover	White	$1.95		
Clover	Light Amber	$1.65		
OHIO				
Basswood	White	$2.00		
OREGON				
Wildflower	Light Amber	$1.40		
WISCONSIN				
Clover	White	$2.00		

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.

Clover	White	$1.96	-	$2.07
Clover	Extra Light	$1.95	-	$1.96
Mixed Flower	White	$1.64	-	$2.05

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

ARGENTINA				
Mixed Flowers	White	$1.45	-	$1.71
Mixed Flowers	Extra Light	$1.45	-	$1.64
Mixed Flowers	Light Amber	$1.35	-	$1.39
BRAZIL				
Mixed Flowers	White	$1.65		
Mixed Flowers	Light Amber	$1.39	-	$1.63
Orange	Extra Light	$1.88	-	$1.92
ORGANIC	White	$1.64	-	$1.79
ORGANIC	Extra Light	$1.66	-	$1.72
ORGANIC	Light Amber	$1.50	-	$1.92
CHILE				
Mixed Flowers	White	$1.57		
Mixed Flowers	Light Amber	$1.39		
INDIA				
Mixed Flowers	White	$1.44	-	$1.45
Mixed Flowers	Extra Light	$1.37	-	$1.39
Mixed Flowers	Light Amber	$1.34	-	$1.35
Mustard	White	$1.39	-	$1.44
Mustard	Extra Light	$1.39		
URUGUAY				
Mixed Flower	White	$1.55	-	$1.73
Mixed Flower	Extra Light	$1.49	-	$1.73
Mixed Flower	Light Amber	$1.37	-	$1.43
VIETNAM				
Mixed Flowers	Light Amber	$1.34	-	$1.36

COLONY, HONEY PLANT AND MARKET CONDITIONS DURING APRIL, 2013

APPALACHIAN DISTRICT (MD, PA, VA, WV): April temperatures were near normal for most of the month with intermittent showers. The weekend of April 20-22 the temperatures dipped into the lower thirties resulting in only minor damage to some king bloom on select orchard trees. Peaches were in bloom as were sweet cherries, plums, asian pears and early pear varieties. For the most part, the weather has been excellent for bee activity. Colony health remained variable as beekeepers recover from winter losses mostly due to starvation. Colonies are actively

collecting pollen under ideal conditions from orchards as apples and late season pears are currently in full bloom. Other spring blooming plants are also sources and pollen counts the last week of April were the highest for the year.

ALABAMA: April weather in North Alabama has been rainy and cool. The weather has delayed most honeybee activity by at least two weeks. Winter survival, colony build up, swarming and nectar gathering have all been below normal according to some North Alabama beekeepers. Blueberries and clovers are blooming so bees are starting to gather nectar. South Alabama has had a much better April. Plenty of rain and some milder temperatures have gotten the honey flow started. Early mild temperatures caused some swarming which may ultimately hurt the honey crop. Clover, hollies and even privet are blooming, which have the bees gathering nectar and pollen in earnest. The outlook is good for most beekeepers if they didn't get hit too hard by swarming. The build-up of pests has been affected by the weather in North Alabama with reports of problems being minimal. European foulbrood has been reported in South and Central Alabama in a couple of locations, but nothing serious.

ARIZONA: Temperatures were above normal during most of the month of April in Arizona. The range of temperatures for the month included a high of 104 degrees Fahrenheit in Bullhead City to a low of 7 degrees Fahrenheit at Grand Canyon. During the four weeks in April, 0, 16,2 and 1 of the 22 reporting stations received precipitation, respectively. For 2013 thus far, 4 of the 22 reporting stations are at above normal precipitation levels for the year.

Most Arizona bee colonies have returned to the state after spending the past few months out of state for the purposes of pollinating fruit and nut trees elsewhere. Desert and plant bloom were the main sources for nectar and pollen in the state, with alfalfa also serving as a source. It is too early to tell, but after a wet winter, there is the potential for more flowers and pollen available this summer, and increased bee activity in the state.

Demand for honey remains good.

ARKANSAS: Everything is covered in pollen. Many of the spring Flora are starting to bloom. Supplemental feeding is not necessary at this point. Colonies were in good condition. Bees have wintered well with much reserve honey. Concerns of having another very hot summer turns attention toward having to feed the bees if the temperatures are anywhere close to those of last year. The last two years bee keepers have had to feed due to the high heat. The weather has been at least 15 degrees colder than normal for this time of year. Morning temperatures have reached as low as 36 degrees. The swarm season barley started when the cold weather returned. Spring is being inconsistent. Food remains in amounts but we need warmer weather. When the warm weather returns in earnest, with the moisture we've had, the honey flow should be good. Pints in the local area are selling for $8.00, and quarts are selling for $14.00. There is always a demand, while supply catches up to the demand.

People are interested in the plight of the honey bee, and they are becoming more involved. A bee club removed a colony from the front of the local TV station and in turn received publicity for their upcoming beginning Beekeeping classes. With the public interest and additional publicity, attendance doubled for this specific class from 100 last year to 208 this year.

CALIFORNIA: The month of April saw some scattered showers in Northern California and the North Coast early in the month, and a slow-moving low pressure system resulted in heavier rain showers and thunderstorm activity for the interior and northern sections. Portions of the Sacramento and Northern San Joaquin Valley areas received well over an inch of rain. A cold front moved through California, spreading light precipitation across much of the State. The showers gradually tapered off and gusty northerly winds brought a dry offshore flow into the State, especially to Southern California. Upper level high pressure began to build over the West Coast, continuing the dry conditions and bringing a warming trend, while the gusty north winds persisted. At the close of the month, much of the State experienced temperatures several degrees above average with some locations running 10 to 15 degrees above normal temperatures. Many valley locations would check in temperatures above 90 degrees, with many southern desert locations topping 100 degrees. Water Year 2012-13 started off with an extremely wet November and December, but California has seen the driest January and February on record with a combined precipitation total at only 2.3 inches. Thanks to the earlier storms this year reservoir storage is fairly good but this will decrease by summer due to supply demands and the below average snowmelt this year.

Overall, April was a good month for the bees. Colonies have built up well and beekeepers are done making divides. Beekeepers had a strong combination of flows at the beginning of the month - citrus, which was late, avocado, mustard, wildflowers, eucalyptus, and black button sage all were going strong. Most commercial beekeepers took advantage of the favorable conditions to make large amounts of colony divisions to recover their losses from the previous winter. Due to the poor rainfall of the winter the spring bloom has had little staying power, and now appears to be over for the season. Beekeepers are now looking towards some summer pollination and the realization that with another dry year in motion, this summer will require careful planning and budgeting to feed and medicate hives from now till the almonds next year. Some bee colonies are being moved to irrigated crops for seed and melon pollination since there is little or no honey to be made. Beekeepers who are not moving their bees to irrigated areas will likely need to start feeding shortly. In early April, bees actively pollinated late stone fruit orchards. Bees were removed from orchards where bloom was complete and some hives began to be shipped out of state. Pollination of berries continued as conditions permitted. Where available, bees are feeding on wild mustard, rosemary, borage, dandelions, oaks, apple trees, poppies, clover, catalpa trees, black walnuts, bottlebrush, wild radishes and the ongoing bloom of eucalyptus trees. In Southern California, bees are actively pollinating onion, alfalfa and sunflower fields. Some alfalfa honey is expected this summer.

Citrus is wrapping up with very little honey to be found. On the positive side with very little orange honey being made prices should remain strong for those with honey to sell. Some sage honey was also produced, but in very limited areas. The next honey flow will be seed alfalfa starting the first or second week of June. Seed pollination fees for Kiwi and Onion now are bringing about $40.00 and higher per colony. Healthy bees equal good crop pollination, and farmers are working with organizations to introduce new flowers and plants on their property that help feed bees. A group called "Project Apis m." created a Seeds for Bees program. Both farmers and home gardeners can request free seed packets for plants that contribute to bee nutrition. Growers plant the seeds on farms to provide more forage for bees that are busy pollinating orchards and crops.

COLORADO: The weather across Colorado during April, according to the National Weather Service, was colder than normal. There was below normal precipitation over most southern areas of Colorado and above normal snow in many northern areas. In the month of April, Denver had over 20 inches of snow. This is the second month in a row which Denver has recorded over 20 inches of snow. Snow pack in the southwest area is only around 66 percent of normal, which is causing an alarm signal to beekeepers in the area. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the exceptional drought condition in the southeastern and eastern areas of Colorado continues. The rest of the State remains in a moderate to severe drought category, which is a slight improvement from the past month. It is still so dry in many parts of Colorado that contingency plans are starting to take shape to combat the possibility of forest fires across the State during the summer months.

Commercial beekeepers have indicated that their returning hives from the California almond pollination season did not show the robust hive strength that they had hoped for this spring. Beekeepers that moved their bees from California to Texas have had barely enough early honey flow to eliminate the need of supplemental feeding. This was due to reduced salt cedar habitat for bees to forage. Other beekeepers in Colorado have been feeding their bee's corn syrup and pollen patties in an effort to keep the remaining bee colonies healthy and prepare them for the upcoming season. Some luck and good weather seems to make a big difference in success or failure from year to year. Mites seem to be under control at this point of time, but beekeepers are preparing to treat their hives in an effort to stay ahead of the problem. Beekeepers are also actively dividing and re-queening hives during April. Some beekeepers have experienced combined bee losses, in Colorado since the fall of 2012 to early spring 2013, up to 46 percent in some areas of the State. There is no conclusive evidence if there were environmental factors in California that caused the losses, or if the losses stemmed from the residual effects of the myriad of factors from 2012 including drought issues, pesticides, starvation, nocema, and mites. To pinpoint any one factor for bee losses seems to be impossible at this time. A small honey flow is anticipated with the blooming of dandelions during the last week of April in some parts of Colorado. This is certainly well behind normal. Currently, wholesale and retail demand for honey exceeds supply in Colorado until the new crop honey becomes available.

FLORIDA: The weather was generally dry for most of the month, with some showers arriving late in the month. Daily temperatures were not consistent with alternating periods of fairly cool temperatures and other periods with highs in the low to mid 80's. The cool temperatures probably contributed to a significant drop in production of orange blossom honey. There are no accurate estimates of the crop yet, but some sources believe there may be less than a half of a normal crop. Production is certainly much less than a normal crop. Florida is a big producer of the nations' orange blossom honey, with most of the rest coming from California. Texas and Arizona also produce small amounts of orange blossom honey. Bee health was considered generally good, with very good varroa mite control reported by most producers. The official report of winter losses has not been released yet, but they are expected to be a little less than normal. Some sources are expecting them to be approximately 25% or less overall. However, a few beekeepers have reported losses as high as 90%. Gallberry and palmetto started in most areas with some honey being produced. Tupelo was just beginning, with no honey production reported by late in the month. All of the bees have returned from the California almond pollination, with some producers already relocating hives to Northern states, including Michigan and Maine. These hives are for pollination purposes only, with no marketable honey produced. A few hives moved north were relocated before the last snow of the season and received some damage from late snowfalls. The supply of honey continues to be light with good demand. Prices for extra light and light amber orange blossom honey is expected to remain steady in the $2.00-$2.25 range.

GEORGIA: Beekeepers throughout the state are still trying to recover from last year's patchy weather conditions and sporadic temperature fluctuations that contributed to losses of some bees and less production of honey. Those conditions coupled with hive beetles, mites, bacterial and viral infections have beekeepers on alert and working hard with good management practices and replenishing the hives with new stock to rebuild numbers. In the northern area of the state, rain and high moisture conditions, along with a late start with blooms has caused the beekeepers to resort to supplemental feeding to keep the bees healthy and in good shape. In both the northern and southern areas, a slow honey flow is reported and less volume is expected. Currently the price of honey is steady, however it is projected to go up later in the year as demand increases. Tupelo is blooming in the south areas and blackberries are in the northern areas.

IDAHO: The spring temperatures in April were below normal in all areas of the State except some northern areas. Western areas of the State generally received slightly above normal precipitation during April while eastern areas including Idaho Falls and Pocatello were still behind on their monthly averages. Overall, the colder weather has delayed progress on spring work according to beekeepers with many locations across the State. Many locations are two weeks behind normal. The U.S. Drought Monitor currently indicates that the upper panhandle and central parts of Idaho are normal on precipitation. The southeast and southwest parts of the State are still listed as being in an abnormally dry to moderate drought. The dry areas in Idaho, have not become more pronounced at this point of time. As the growing season starts, critical precipitation will be needed though to prevent drier conditions from developing. The snow pack was below normal this past winter and will certainly have implications for the upcoming 2013 growing season. As a result, some agronomic growers will only have 50 percent of their normal irrigation water allotted, based upon the current water levels of the lakes. This fact alone could influence the vegetative cover and somewhat limit foraging crops for the bees unless additional precipitation falls during the next 3 months.

Beekeepers from Idaho have been actively dividing and re-queening hives during April. The remaining bees that survived the winter months are currently looking healthy. Beekeepers have also been feeding their bees in preparation for the upcoming season. Some beekeepers have been feeding corn syrup and pollen patties and others have been feeding sucrose without any additional pollen, while others are attempting to utilize their own honey stores to save money. Some luck and good weather seems to make a big difference in success or failure from year to year. Winter losses in Idaho certainly seem to be well below many other States, ranging from 8 percent to 15 percent in many of the larger commercial beekeeping operations. Some of the losses were the result of starvation and nocema symptoms. Other losses are still unexplained and could be linked to the myriad of problems from the 2012 season. Mites seem to be under control at this point of time, but beekeepers have been treating their hives in an effort to stay ahead of the problem. It is anticipated that there may be some limited honey flow from dandelions by May 6th. This is certainly well behind normal. Currently, wholesale and retail demand for honey exceeds supply in Idaho until the new crop honey becomes available.

ILLINOIS: The weather became highly favorable during the latter part of the month as temperatures ranged in the high 60-70s, while staying in the lower 30-50s the beginning of April; however there was also above average moisture as many parts of the state became flooded with heavy rain, hail and even a few snow flurries. Most Beekeeper reported their bees wintered well and are able to have minimum cleaning flights as well as a few hives swarming and looking for foliage and bringing back pollen from willow, maple, and early dandelion. Beekeepers also reported working in their hives cleaning, rebuilding and checking their hives for early honey production. Demand for honey at the retail level is fairly good, while at wholesale level honey prices remain high, but generally unchanged.

IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA: Cool and wet conditions were found throughout the midwest and plain states. Temperatures were below normal asprecipitation was above. This same weather pattern is a continuation from March. Precipitation ranged from six to ten inches above normal for the most part. Soil and subsoil levels continue to improve as drought watch has be relieved in certain areas. Spring tillage and planting is way behind as fields arewet and needing drying out. Most package bees and queens have been delivered, populations have been built up and ready for the flow.

Some feeding was needed. Bee breeders have reported that queens and package bees have been in good demand.Last season, bees missed out on the early honey flow as the much warmer and drier conditions brought on early pollen and nectar sources. Pollen and nectar sources have been wild flowers, dandelions, fruit orchards and various ornamentals.

INDIANA: Temperatures for the month of April were quite chilly with lots of moisture due to rain, sleet, and snow which caused some flooding in many parts of the state the early and middle part of the month. Beekeepers remain optimistic that the weather would break. Finally by the end of the month temperatures became quite favorable as beekeepers got started cleaning out their hives and checking for honey production. Most beekeepers report their bees wintered well as they look forward to warmer temperatures and pollination of spring and summer vegetables. Beekeepers report their bees in fair to good condition. Demand for honey is fairly good as prices are generally unchanged.

KENTUCKY: The Freeze thaw cycle was hard on the bees in most areas of Kentucky. There are estimates of about 35% winter/spring losses. As the weather stabilizes, colony health should be rebounding. Dandelion, henbit, chickweed, wild mustard, ground ivy, white clover, bush honeysuckle, jonquil (buttercup), maple, elm, willow, cherry & redbud are the current pollen and nectar sources.

LOUISIANA: Pollen and nectar sources received during April were from various trees and wild flowers. Colonies were in generally good condition. Weather has seen about normal temperatures with adequate rainfall. Supply and demand are fair.

MICHIGAN: Cool temperatures continued to delay the arrival of Spring-like weather conditions across the state. Many hives are running short of food supplies, and beekeepers have lost hives to starvation and bees have begun spring brood buildup. There are reports that many producers and nuc producers have sold out of packages; replacement bee shipments have been delayed due to cool weather in many regions of the country. In the Southeast region, winter losses have begun to mount. In September 2012, beekeepers reported 328 hives alive, while a recent April poll showed only 141 of those hives were still alive, a 59% loss, compared to an 18% loss one year earlier. Cleansing flights have been possible in the lower half of the state about once a week; however, there has been very little forage for bees as yet. Maples and willows have started to bloom, which should stimulate spring build up in some of the hives. Heavy rains plagued the lower half of the state the week of April 14 and again April 23-24, with regions in northern Michigan still receiving additional snowfall to the already covered fields. Temperatures in the lower 20s were reported in Southern Michigan for a brief period April 21st. Michigan State University Extension officials have estimated fruit crop advancement at 7-10 days behind normal in Central and Southern Michigan, and on target to be one of the latest bloom cycles on record. Warmer temperatures are forecasted at the end of the month. Bee colonies that were shipped to California for almond pollination returned with healthy stores. Presently, some beekeepers have remained longer in Florida due to optimal temperatures and are preparing and re-queening units to be shipped back to Michigan in early May for tree fruit and blueberry pollination. Michigan weather has remained cool and wet during the month. Hives returning from Florida appear to be exceptional, due to the heavy spring pollen flow and small nectar flows from oranges and palmetto.

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MINNESOTA: Cold" was the main word to describe temperatures in Minnesota during the month of April. This year has been a stark contrast when compared to April 2012, which broke many records. The entire State recorded below normal temperatures for the entire month of April this year. Many areas had average temperatures from 7 to 11 degrees below normal for the month according to the National Weather Service. There was below normal precipitation in the Southwestern part of Minnesota. This was certainly not representative of the rest of the State during the same period. Duluth in Northern Minnesota received over 50 inches of snow during April. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, only a small part of Southwestern Minnesota is still listed in a severe drought. Drought conditions across the rest of the State have improved during April with the above normal amounts of snow. Due to the excess snow and cold temperatures across Minnesota during April, little spring work had been accomplished by the end of the month.

Beekeepers from Minnesota plan to actively begin dividing and re-queening hives as soon as the weather breaks. Spring chores include feeding their bees in preparation for the upcoming season. Some beekeepers plan to feed corn syrup and pollen patties. Others have been feeding sucrose without any additional pollen, while others are attempting to utilize their own honey stores to save money. Some luck and good weather seems to make a big difference in success or failure from year to year. Winter losses in Minnesota for the most part, certainly seem to be well below many other States, ranging from 20 percent to 25 percent in many of the larger commercial beekeeping operations. Some of the losses were the result of starvation and nocema symptoms. Other losses are still unexplained and could be linked to the myriad of problems from the 2012 season including pesticides and drought conditions. The remaining bees that survived the winter months are currently looking healthy. Mites seem to be under control at this point of time, but beekeepers plan to treat as soon as the weather improves in an effort to stay ahead of the problem. The cold wet conditions have delayed spring blooming plants and trees. This year is certainly well behind normal and well behind progress at this point of time last year. Currently, wholesale and retail demand for honey exceeds supply in Minnesota until the new crop honey becomes available.

MISSISSIPPI: The beekeepers are busy rebuilding the numbers in the hives, while trying to overcome from the losses of last year. Intensive management of the hives is the primary focus, to keep the bees in optimum condition for this season. Blooms from Hen Bit, Clover, Blackberries, Privet Hedge and Yellow Top are in and the bees are busy collecting pollen and making honey. The weather has been fairly good along the coast areas and some central and northern areas are still dealing with moisture from earlier rains. Beekeepers are hoping it warms up so activity within the hives increases. Prices are about $8.00-10.00 retail for a quart of raw wildflower honey.

MONTANA: By the end of April, temperatures varied widely in Montana with highs in the mid 60s to the low 80s, with the lows in the single digits to the lower 20s. Topsoil moisture measurements at the end of April measured 31 percent very short, and short, compared to 26 percent last year; 64 percent adequate, 68 percent last year; 5 percent surplus, compared to 6 percent last year. Subsoil moisture measured 45 percent short and very short, while 55 percent of subsoil moisture measurements were adequate or surplus.

Bee keepers reported colonies to be in generally good condition with good mite prevention measures. During April, some migratory colonies were brought home to Montana from California while others were moved up the coast into Washington and Oregon orchards for the tree fruit and early berry pollination, although, with the generally cool weather continuing, bee pollination activity was hampered at times. In Montana, new packages were being set up with queens, while colonies where being staged away from flood plain areas. Some supplement feeding was required for colonies while the willows, dandelions, chokecherries, box elder, and wild white flowers were starting to emerge by the end of April. Honey demand was said to be good.

NEW ENGLAND: New England weather has been intermittently wet and cooler than in prior years. This weather pattern featured cooler, unstable temperatures with a mixture of some mild to warm days and some unseasonable warm days sporadically placed along the month. This year's spring has finally arrived, which is the exact opposite of last year, when New England experienced early warm weather patterns and swarming started at the end of March. All regions reported high moisture levels and this should help push earlier than normal ornamental and floral sources for pollen and nectar such as quaking aspen, alder, spice bush, sassafras, leather leaf, pin cherry, blueberry and many varieties of apple bloom especially crab apple. The early Easter and Passover Holidays coincided with the usual advent of regional pollen and nectar sources such as ground ivy (glechoma hederacea), chickweed (stellaria media), snow drop (chionadoxa luciliae), Siberian squill (scilla Siberica), American elm (ulmus Americana), jasmine, witch hazel, dandelions and willows such as goat, white, black and pussy (Salix discolor). Bees are getting pollen and nectar when they can but it seems like it stays consistently cool. Bees need warmer temperatures to actively increase foraging. Cooler temperatures in higher elevations have created a problem with chill brood whereby the queen's activity has been restricted.

Reportedly some keepers lost hives to a continuance of cooler weather, preventing bees from foraging and because there were no surplus honey stores. Additionally, nectar sources were not fully available. Nectar sources are usually short after a warm winter and consequently, unchecked hives ran out of stores and starved to death. Hives will normally consume 1.2 lbs. 'of honey per day with full colonies ranging from 40,000-50,000 bees. Northwestern New England shows mixed reports on losses of around 40%, mainly due to starvation or queen loss. In this region, bees reportedly came through winter somewhat weak in populations and winter losses were high. In Northern New England, wintered over colonies reportedly are now fairly static in brood rearing and there are problems with clusters remaining small. Surviving weak colonies have been combined and hive bodies are being rotated with most over wintered queens beginning to lay normally. Northern keepers will keep their entrance reducers in place until the end of May as cold snaps are quite common with changing New England weather. In Southern New England, colonies have rapidly strengthened. The weather started to cooperate by mid-April and bees started to forage in force. Queens have started to strongly lay with nucleus colonies building so fast that divides and splits are necessary to prevent swarming. Reportedly all keepers are active in checking food sources weekly, are reversing hive bodies as fast as every two weeks to keep the brood in the bottom and will add a super before the bees get crowded. Queens are now laying larger patterns of brood; colonies are expanding brood nests and bringing in good amounts of pollen and nectar when they are not experiencing cold weather.

Feeding is always very heavy and important to monitor for this time of year. Beekeepers continue to administer pollen supports and supplemental feedings on a need basis and will make sure that syrup 1:1 is available on the hive until combs are drawn out. In regard to established colonies, seasoned keepers try to make sure that they have ample room to expand and that honey supers are timely ready or already in place, since the queen has already been laying usually at a rate of 1500 eggs a day, hence making sure that there is enough food for the new brood. Seasoned beekeepers have noted that we are facing a possible swarming problem this spring especially in southern New England whereby spurts of really warm weather have created for many keepers, fast fills of medium supers of honey this spring already, with extremely fast pollen loads and some nectar now coming on. We will soon have many new pollen and especially nectar sources as fruit pollination begins in a few weeks and with the advent of many new wild flowers. Additionally, honeysuckle and black locust will soon give a good push to the honey flow. Georgia package bee producers have delayed pickup dates by two-three weeks as they suffered above normal losses and weather conditions have delayed colony buildup. Since most New England keepers are dependent upon southern suppliers, there is a serious growing concern that many keepers will not receive their bees and it looks like many keepers will be prorated on how many packages they will receive. Overall in New England and especially in Massachusetts, demand for startup and replacement bees has been strong. Massachusetts State bee inspectors report up to 50% or more of hive winter losses. Keepers that have recently received package bees/nucs or are about to, are just setting up in anticipation and are hopeful for a strong summer production season.

Purportedly, Prices for package bees range from $70.00 to $100.00 mostly $85.00 for a 3 lb. package with queen with many regional beekeeping associations offering this price scheme lineup. Reportedly, 3 to 5 frame nuclei colonies average $100.00 to $150.00 depending on being Italian or Russian; whereby nuclei colonies usually develop 5 to 6 weeks ahead of package startups with less Supercedure problems due to population imbalances before new brood starts to hatch. Reportedly, packages that loose queens can develop laying workers quickly. Beekeepers are currently using formic acid treatments, Mite Away, Apistan and Terramycin mix early to the top frames, in response to addressing possible fast developing varroa mite infestation. Comprehensively for all of New England, the 2013 season will be a rebuilding year for many Northeast beekeepers as they replace lost colonies, and produce smaller honey crops. This past long winter combined with the determinants of pesticides, varroa mites and viruses contributed to many hives losses as we saw too many hives that should have survived, just not make it successfully into this spring. Demand at all retail/wholesale outlets remains good and honey sales remain firm. Prices quoted for retail 1lb bottled units were higher and quoted at $7.00 to $11.00 mostly $10.00 and occasionally higher inclusive of all varieties; for food service operations prices were strong with 5 gallon units selling at $185.00 to $225.00 mostly $220.00 occasionally higher for all raw and natural honey depending on variety and quality.

NEW YORK: Temperatures have remained cooler than normal, although rainfall has been sufficient. In the Finger Lakes region, the early maple and box elder trees are at or near bloom and provide first pollen and help with colony buildup. In the next several days, dandelions should be in bloom and assist in additional sources for bees, as well as elm, willow and oak trees. Losses appear higher than usual, with early predictions averaging between 50-60%; however, bees that survived look strong and are beginning to build quickly. There were few opportunities for cleansing flights during the month due to continued cool and dreary weather. Moderating temperatures are forecasted for the days ahead and an increase in pollen sources will assist hives in building strength and numbers. Commercial hives that overwintered in Florida remained longer than usual due to the moderate temperatures during the month which afforded good brood-building opportunities, especially since the fruit tree bloom delayed in New York. In the Catskills, spring is late as well. Bees have found pollen on willow, alder and popple; daffodils are just beginning to bloom. Beekeepers have reported lighter losses than other parts of the state.

NORTH CAROLINA: Temperatures in North Carolina were variable during April. The State received mostly average precipitation. Statewide soil moisture levels were rated at 6 percent short, 73 percent adequate, and 21 percent surplus the week ending April 27. The North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council reported 39 counties as being abnormally dry and 8 counties as experiencing moderate drought conditions. Beekeepers worked on inspecting hives for disease and mite issues and treated accordingly before serious nectar flow got underway. They also continued to monitor hives for swarming and installed packaged bees.

By late April some beekeepers began installing supers in preparation of the nectar flow. Sumac became an available source across the State. In the Piedmont region Dandelion, Clover (Alsike, Crimson, and Landino white clover) Blackberry, Tulip Poplar, Black Gum, Black Locust, and Vetch began to bloom around mid to late April. Huckleberry, Tulip Poplar, Tupelo Gum, Raspberry, Holly, and Black Gum began blooming in the Coastal Plains region.

Commercial beekeepers moved hives back to North Carolina for blueberry pollination and by the end of the month began preparing to move hives to New Jersey, and later up to Maine, for blueberry pollination in those states.

Demand is remains high for bees and honey.

NORTH & SOUTH DAKOTA: The weather has been fairly normal with variable temperatures and precipitation. Bees have working various areas including Western apple, pear, and stone fruit blooms. Despite some cooler weather the coverage has mostly been good. Some colder nights and windy or rainy days have limited flight times. The western fruit tree crops are almost done with their blooms and bees will begin working their way home.

OHIO: The weather has been cooler and wetter than expected in April with bloom 1-2 weeks behind normal and over a month later than one year earlier. Beekeepers have reported high losses due to starvation in the hives, and some suspect the early Spring last year promoted an increase of varroa mite infestation that was not controlled as timely as needed. New packages of bees have been delayed by cool weather in southern shipping states also, so the opportunity to begin re-building as been curtailed as well. Early foraging sources included mostly maples, with little opportunities for cleansing flights during the month. Some anticipate this year's honey production to be only "fair" at best in the Midwest. With 2012 honey production low, and per capita consumption on the rise, honey prices continue to rise. Most of the local honey supplies have been sold, and beekeepers have found it necessary from southern regions of the state which also involved additional costs due to freight. The average cost across the country for the month inched upwards by one penny and totaled $1.98 pound, with regional Great Lakes prices slightly higher at $2.13 pound.

OKLAHOMA: Pollen and nectar sources received during April for Oklahoma were wild flowers, trees, and various crops. Conditions of the colonies were in good condition. Weather has seen about normal temperatures with adequate rainfall. Supply is low while demand is high.

OREGON: The weather was generally cool and with several nights of cold weather during the tree fruit bloom in orchards. Precipitation received during the month was also generally below average. Topsoil moisture measurements at the end of April measured 2 percent very short, 40 percent short, with 57 percent adequate, and 1 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture measured 36 percent short and very short, while 64 percent of subsoil moisture measurements were adequate or surplus.

Colony health was generally said to be good. Bee keepers were busy with their early spring chores at home while at the same time trucking home any migratory colonies remaining in California. Those returning colonies joined those already in the field in southwestern Oregon, the Willamette river valley, the Hood River area, and the Columbia River Gorge area for the tree fruit and early berry pollination seasons. Orchardists were concerned of the cool, windy weather inhibiting tree fruit pollination, they were required to use frost protection measures in areas to protect the fruit blossoms. Wild plants such as willows, brush, dandelions, and choke cherries were also early sources of pollen and nectar for the bees. Honey demand was good.

SOUTH CAROLINA: No report available.

TENNESSEE: The nectar flow is in full swing throughout Tennessee with unlimited wild flowers and trees blooming. Swarm season has begun. Beekeepers are supering up their colonies. At this time Tennessee appears to be having an excellent honey year.

TEXAS: Pollen and nectar sources received during April for Southern Texas were numerous wildflowers, various trees and red clover. Due to the regular rains the bees are working and producing. Colonies were strong. Perhaps a little too strong. One colony swarmed twice this month. The first swarm got away by landing at the very top of a 40' tree. The second swarm chose to land 25' up. Was able to knock them into a bucket strapped to the end of a metal extension pole and have since hived successfully in a nucleus box. By splitting the queens, and one died in a cold weather snap, but the other seems to be prospering quietly. There is another queen in waiting in case the queen is not accepted. If the new queen is not needed, then will try to split the colony that swarmed twice. Other colony started from the last swarm is still building up. Honey supers have been placed in all hives, but the nectar flow is not yet under way. All colonies are screened bottom boards for better ventilation. As time permits, will begin feeding the colonies one from the swarm and the other from the split to build up their strength.

Pollen and nectar sources received during April for Northern Texas numerous wildflowers, various trees and field crops. Colonies were in generally good condition. Weather conditions have seen very warm days and cool nights, close to freezing with below normal rainfall. Some beekeepers have stated that hives are showing strong honey store early. There has been an increase of requests for local honey.

UTAH: Temperatures were below normal across the entire State during April. According to records from the National Weather Service, precipitation was above normal in all areas of the State during the same period. This is the exact opposite when compared to March of 2013. Despite the above normal precipitation, there is still a deficiency of moisture as indicated on the U.S. Drought Monitor. The U.S. Drought Monitor still has the entire State listed as being in a moderate to severe drought. The snowpack this past winter was around 70 percent of normal according to beekeepers. Certainly more precipitation will be necessary to prevent a reoccurrence of the 2012 drought conditions in the northern sections of the State. The Delta region of Utah has seen a little more precipitation, so the drought is not as severe in this area.

Beekeepers have been feeding their bees in preparation for the upcoming season in Utah and surrounding States. Some beekeepers have been feeding corn syrup and pollen patties in an effort to keep the remaining bee colonies healthy. The goal of all beekeepers is to attempt to improve and maintain the health of their hives. Some luck and good weather seems to make a big difference in success or failure from year to year. Mites seem to be under control at this point of time, but beekeepers have been treating their hives in an effort to stay ahead of the problem. Beekeepers are also actively dividing and re-queening hives during April. Some beekeepers that went to California for the almond pollination experienced a high rate of queen losses in hives. There is no conclusive evidence if there were environmental factors in California that caused the losses of queens or if the losses stemmed from the residual effects of the myriad of factors from 2012 including drought issues, pesticides, starvation, nocema, and mites. To pinpoint any one factor for bee losses seems to be impossible at this time. Combined bee losses in Utah since the fall of 2012 to early spring 2013, are up to 70 percent in some northern areas of the State. A small honey flow started with the blooming of dandelions during the last week of April in Northern Utah. This is certainly well behind normal. Currently, wholesale and retail demand for honey exceeds supply in Utah until the new crop honey becomes available.

WASHINGTON: Fruit tree bloom continues in the later districts and higher elevations. There have been a number of nights requiring frost protection. This along with wind and rain have limited bee activity on certain days. Some frost damage has been reported but it is still too early to say how much. Hives were generally looking good.

WISCONSIN: Temperatures for the month of April were quite cold with a few days of rain, sleet, and snow according to some of the beekeepers which led to a few areas of flooding in parts of the state. The latter part of the month temperatures became warm and favorable with good to moderate temperatures as beekeepers report their bees taking cleansing flights and forging for pollen on maple, dandelion, and willow. A few beekeepers report their bees in good condition and as they remain cleaning and rebuilding their hives for honey production. Demand for honey is fairly good as honey prices are generally unchanged.

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

	Year to Date		March 2013	
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars
COMB & NATURAL HONEY PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE - - -				
Australia(*)	48,610	155,311	44,732	140,245
Bahamas, The	5,871	19,728	3,524	13,535
Barbados	6,896	34,547	3,638	15,151
Bermuda	1,120	4,752	0	0
Cambodia	5,604	13,603	0	0
Cayman Islands	1,278	5,975	743	2,820
China	2,320	22,500	391	2,715
Hong Kong	27,413	114,244	23,310	92,454
Indonesia	66,582	161,613	10,408	25,263
Japan	171,377	704,121	48,597	207,664
Kuwait	60,913	155,343	0	0
Netherlands Antilles(*)	3,062	19,681	898	5,340
New Zealand(*)	1,824	17,334	1,824	17,334
Panama	5,388	31,933	2,694	16,020
Philippines	50,830	129,382	0	0
Singapore	8,067	26,299	0	0
Taiwan	3,396	15,336	0	0
Thailand	18,080	43,884	11,623	28,212
United Arab Emirates	5,430	21,710	0	0
Yemen(*)	68,918	362,702	9,072	50,000
NATURAL HONEY, NOT ELSEWHERE INDICATED OR SPECIFIED - - -				
Australia(*)	6,555	22,847	1,325	5,022
Bahamas, The	9,130	49,996	2,805	16,014
Barbados	621	4,273	0	0
Bermuda	8,015	34,173	3,753	13,188
Canada	208,154	831,018	49,324	194,222
Chile	32,319	78,445	0	0
China	9,170	29,472	250	6,325
Hong Kong	11,160	50,779	11,160	50,779
India	49,980	138,060	0	0
Israel(*)	40,600	202,188	0	0
Jamaica	1,887	5,600	0	0
Japan	106,086	181,539	41,206	60,555
Kuwait	61,625	151,608	60,795	147,561
Mongolia	406	2,530	406	2,530
Netherlands Antilles(*)	2,785	13,463	0	0
Panama	403	3,854	403	3,854
Saudi Arabia	20,625	102,253	2,225	5,400
Singapore	1,257	8,778	1,257	8,778
Taiwan	453	2,811	453	2,811
United Arab Emirates	16,176	118,828	16,176	118,828
Venezuela	7,621	18,498	7,621	18,498
Yemen(*)	1,176	14,000	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	1,159,183	4,125,011	360,613	1,271,118

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

	Year to Date			March 2013		
	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars	Quantity Kilograms	Value Dollars	CIF Value Dollars
WHITE HONEY – NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE - - -						
Argentina	1,563,510	4,854,174	5,066,559	1,015,815	3,218,888	3,395,664
Brazil	449,886	1,686,749	1,746,359	169,379	602,441	619,280
Canada	3,556,157	15,305,283	15,379,852	760,911	3,495,012	3,508,012
Chile	177,717	578,857	585,751	58,670	193,808	195,202
Egypt	24,000	79,200	81,700	0	0	0
France(*)	284	5,068	5,210	0	0	0
Germany(*)	420	2,722	2,968	0	0	0
India	882,900	2,522,595	2,572,036	882,900	2,522,595	2,572,036
Korea, South	720	6,075	6,183	720	6,075	6,183
Mexico	118,070	419,414	419,432	19,412	73,609	73,612
Poland	1,825	12,799	13,479	1,825	12,799	13,479
United Kingdom	1,411	14,932	15,498	1,411	14,932	15,498
Uruguay	93,875	305,108	311,669	74,979	244,641	249,891
EXTRA LIGHT AMBER HONEY – NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE - - -						
Argentina	5,412,214	16,632,400	17,221,532	3,191,692	9,943,053	10,314,252
Brazil	625,445	2,285,602	2,357,526	229,841	819,748	844,675
Canada	246,802	1,103,299	1,110,375	51,474	250,911	252,386
Chile	55,612	176,451	184,222	36,846	118,285	124,171
France(*)	1,349	14,540	19,112	612	6,714	6,748
India	1,351,500	3,505,687	3,675,419	886,500	2,334,361	2,448,493
Italy(*)	5,994	14,970	16,680	5,709	10,068	11,568
Japan	14	3,743	4,159	0	0	0
Mexico	447,536	1,577,087	1,580,041	76,826	284,502	285,908
Pakistan	57,000	148,200	157,700	19,000	49,400	52,900
Sweden	480	5,329	5,520	0	0	0
Ukraine	491,899	1,356,054	1,388,014	207,960	575,774	592,562
Uruguay	312,189	975,080	1,000,445	263,522	823,240	845,953
Vietnam	174,840	408,951	437,731	0	0	0
LIGHT AMBER HONEY – NOT PACKAGED FOR RETAIL SALE –						
Argentina	2,719,811	8,144,365	8,572,286	901,435	2,871,186	3,089,291
Austria	8,330	73,427	78,334	4,109	35,629	37,770
Brazil	1,535,745	4,850,383	5,006,480	454,420	1,381,294	1,421,487
Canada	8,229	25,867	26,342	0	0	0
Chile	346,279	1,058,232	1,093,897	266,695	828,213	857,008
Dominican Republic	99,909	269,988	283,953	79,950	215,658	225,649
France(*)	396	2,791	3,070	0	0	0
Germany(*)	41,943	220,654	235,350	38,289	195,794	208,629
Greece	2,394	24,331	26,207	0	0	0
Guatemala	40,800	109,140	114,140	0	0	0
India	864,090	2,176,240	2,299,560	254,360	641,541	680,340
Italy(*)	740	12,074	12,745	140	2,044	2,264
Kenya	3,000	15,000	16,916	0	0	0
Mexico	264,774	774,086	800,876	72,000	234,000	244,000

New Zealand(*)	13,104	600,219	606,219	5,640	261,334	263,334
Poland	2,006	9,661	10,264	765	4,394	4,606
Romania	1,920	11,664	12,565	0	0	0
Spain	4,634	36,220	37,350	1,754	14,396	14,849
Turkey	260,400	446,400	486,400	0	0	0
Ukraine	56,003	152,872	160,372	0	0	0
Uruguay	598,362	1,698,270	1,726,366	486,819	1,385,950	1,408,550
Vietnam	4,088,336	10,109,419	10,602,606	955,484	2,400,320	2,531,210

NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED OR INDICATED ---

Argentina	111,304	354,860	368,340	111,304	354,860	368,340
Austria	743	6,917	7,379	0	0	0
Canada	15,617	58,038	58,185	480	4,773	4,873
Chile	38,489	99,658	100,061	19,159	50,570	50,770
Dominican Republic	24,684	54,612	57,272	0	0	0
Egypt	600	3,800	4,133	0	0	0
France(*)	2,559	29,230	31,547	2,559	29,230	31,547
Greece	7,275	76,641	80,950	0	0	0
Italy(*)	2,422	26,725	28,062	495	5,650	6,138
Japan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	37,120	74,426	74,427	0	0	0
Lithuania	6,144	30,720	32,720	0	0	0
Mexico	41,489	106,107	107,232	4,931	6,192	6,292
Moldova	5,191	4,796	5,939	5,191	4,796	5,939
New Zealand(*)	141,239	1,214,260	1,259,027	24,216	258,040	280,153
Poland	5,764	23,895	25,241	3,019	13,978	14,667
Russia	6,856	17,094	17,804	0	0	0
Taiwan	200,700	479,461	497,788	38,280	96,083	99,283
Ukraine	19,140	61,050	61,247	0	0	0
Uzbekistan, Republic of	515	3,868	4,255	0	0	0
Vietnam	962,200	2,320,419	2,669,056	403,540	995,949	1,070,735

COMB AND RETAIL HONEY –

Austria	1,531	16,312	17,370	709	8,006	8,754
Bulgaria	26,445	101,870	106,423	0	0	0
Canada	157,490	904,606	908,793	72,546	395,442	397,497
France(*)	17,833	196,463	209,312	2,855	35,786	39,990
Germany(*)	24,978	151,005	156,005	12,526	73,944	76,444
Greece	2,597	29,063	29,636	2,597	29,063	29,636
Guatemala	1,490	4,008	4,220	0	0	0
India	69,976	261,173	276,357	16,332	70,500	77,550
Ireland	434	2,931	3,607	0	0	0
Israel(*)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Italy(*)	2,894	28,883	30,795	337	8,582	9,348
Moldova	6,971	25,953	28,591	663	3,711	4,051
New Zealand(*)	24,277	270,006	281,855	0	0	0
Poland	5,187	14,593	15,523	3,894	9,145	9,670
Portugal	4,834	33,286	34,933	4,461	30,444	31,826
Romania	346	3,168	3,413	0	0	0
Russia	20,474	141,946	156,140	3,363	24,602	27,062
Spain	36,000	250,132	257,132	18,000	124,419	127,919
Switzerland(*)	25,301	168,743	178,403	9,456	66,400	70,541
Taiwan	2,297	3,549	3,792	2,297	3,549	3,792
Thailand	660	2,881	3,100	0	0	0
Turkey	22,242	135,954	141,475	0	0	0

Ukraine	6,680	31,143	33,372	0	0	0
United Kingdom	168	2,692	2,695	0	0	0
FLAVORED HONEY –						
Canada	361	26,357	26,516	0	0	0
Germany(*)	9,602	45,918	48,869	0	0	0
Italy(*)	1,036	15,595	15,889	60	2,248	2,292
Japan	90	15,786	15,886	0	0	0
Korea, South	22,767	340,407	346,569	10,093	192,122	195,091
Mexico	73,796	722,381	725,942	19,883	209,549	210,613
New Zealand(*)	215	21,880	22,105	0	0	0
Norway(*)	22,805	614,263	620,464	0	0	0
Spain	2,217	15,714	17,543	739	5,238	6,395
Taiwan	3,948	8,112	8,606	1,608	4,346	4,570
Thailand	46,026	206,827	213,857	25,848	117,297	121,435
ORGANIC HONEY –						
Argentina	6,300	41,065	41,745	0	0	0
Brazil	593,062	1,980,565	2,034,522	124,242	426,567	436,499
Canada	144,743	842,810	849,360	80,239	536,846	538,896
Dominican Republic	4,800	10,560	10,919	4,800	10,560	10,919
France(*)	3,873	38,822	40,097	3,873	38,822	40,097
Greece	547	9,656	10,209	547	9,656	10,209
Italy(*)	10,613	117,873	121,823	1,416	24,338	26,067
Kuwait	1,090	11,314	11,647	0	0	0
Mexico	133,018	460,149	460,922	19,558	68,709	68,822
New Zealand(*)	300	8,240	10,183	300	8,240	10,183
GRAND TOTAL	30,187,219	98,202,903	101,604,750	12,534,280	40,430,861	41,952,365

Notes:

1. **Data Source: Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics**
2. **All zeroes for a data item may show that statistics exist in the other import type. Consumption or General.**
3. **(*) denotes a country that is a summarization of its component countries.**
4. **Users should use cautious interpretation on QUANTITY reports using mixed units of measure. QUANTITY line items will only include statistics on the units of measure that are equal to, or are able to be converted to, the assigned unit of measure of the grouped commodities.**
5. **The CIF Value is not included within the 13th month data loads. This means that the CIF Value will be zero (0) for any records that are inserted during this process.**
6. **Product Group : Harmonized**