

COLOSS: Honey Bee Colony Loss/Survival Survey

2017/2018

Dear Beekeeper,

Your contribution to this annual survey on colony losses is much appreciated. At various points in the questionnaire below, there are points of **Information** marked in **RED**. Hopefully these will explain the logic of the questions that follow. Please try to complete **all** the questions as this will allow not only the number of winter colony losses to be calculated, but will also contribute to identifying the possible causes for these losses.

Please send completed questionnaires to:

Dr Mary F Coffey, Teagasc, Oakpark Research Centre, Carlow

All completed surveys **should be returned by 1 June 2018**.

Please note that the questionnaire will also be available online from May 1st on the webpages of FIBKA, NIHBS and IBA CLG, however it is important that each beekeeper only completes the survey once.

Thank you

Mary F

Information: Completing your personal details (name, address and contact details) is optional but details of the town/county closest to apiary is essential. Please note that any personal information provided will be removed from the file used for processing the data and kept confidential.

First name _____
Last name _____
Address _____
City _____
Postal code _____
Email _____
County _____
Country **Ireland**

- ① To describe the location of your main apiary or operation, please state
- the name of a city/town/village near to your apiary? _____
 - and the postal code of the apiary (or a postal code nearby) _____

- ② How many apiaries do you have?

- ③ If you have more than one apiary, are all your apiaries within a distance of about 15 km of each other? If you have only one apiary, please answer yes.

Yes No Don't know

Information: Numbers of colonies, losses and status of the colony post-winter. Please consider winter as the period between the moment that you finished the pre-winter preparations for your colonies and the start of the new foraging season. In this questionnaire we try to gather information about production colonies. A production colony is a colony which is queen right and is strong enough to produce honey.

4 How many production colonies did you have before winter 2017-2018?

Information: In the next questions you are asked for numbers of colonies lost. Please consider a colony as lost if it: a) died out (or reduced to a few hundred bees) during winter, b) died due to natural disaster or c) was alive but with queen problems (*drone laying queens or no queen at all*) which you couldn't solve. Each lost colony should be included in only one of these three categories.

5 How many of these (4) colonies did you lose, because they were alive but had unsolvable queen problems. If none, please answer 0.

6 How many of these (4) colonies did you lose, because of natural disaster (flooding, storm, fallen tree, cattle/sheep, vandalism, theft, rodents)?

7 How many of these (4) colonies did you lose, because they were dead?

8 How many of the dead colonies (7)

a) ... had many dead bees in or in front of the hive?

b) ... had no or only a few dead bees in or in front of the empty hive?

c) ... had dead workers in cells and no food present in the hive (signs of starvation)?

d) ... had dead workers in cells while food was present in the hive?

e) ... had none of the above or unknown symptoms?

9 How many of the wintered colonies (4) were weak but queenright after winter 2017-2018?

Information: We would like to calculate increases and decreases in the number of colonies, so if you had colonies in spring 2017 and remember how many you had, please answer the following two questions, considering spring as the start of the foraging season:

10 How many production colonies did you have in a) spring 2017 (last year)?
b) spring 2018?

Information: Conditions in the colonies, the environment around the apiary, and management:

11 How many of the wintered colonies had a new queen in 2017? Don't know

22 If you gave your colonies a supplemental sugar feed (sugar solution or inverted sugar) last year to prepare for winter, how many kg of sugar (dry matter) did you give on average per production colony?

23 Do you keep your bees in an area where Varroa has still not been detected?
 Yes No Don't know

24 Have you noticed bees with crippled/deformed wings in your colonies (during the summer season)? (These are signs of the presence of Deformed Wing Virus, which is spread by Varroa mites).
 Not at all to a limited extent to a large extent Don't know

25 What particular measures apply for the majority of your beekeeping:

a) Screened (mesh) bottom board in Winter	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
b) Insulated hives in Winter (incl. double walled hives)	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
c) Hives made from synthetic materials	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
d) Certified organic beekeeping	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
e) Queens bred from Varroa tolerant/resistant stock	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
f) Small brood cell size (5.1 mm or less)	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
g) Natural comb (without foundation)	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
h) Purchase wax from outside own operation	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know
i) Non-wax foundation in brood chamber	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Don't know

26 Did you observe *Vespa velutina* (Asian hornet) foraging for honey bees in your apiary/apiaries?
 Yes No Don't know

On behalf of the National Apiculture Programme sincere thanks for completing this annual survey. We appreciate the time you have put into completing the Survey.

Mary Frances Coffey

April 2018