

Agriculture Fact Sheet

Beekeeping 2024

- Mississippi has 12 full-time commercial beekeepers, 30 to 40 part-time honey producers and 800 hobbyists.
- Net annual income of Mississippi beekeepers from honey and beeswax production, sale of packaged bees and queens and pollination fees is estimated to be between \$2.1 and \$3.1 million.
- Mississippi produces about 2.32 million pounds of honey each year.
- There are between 29,000 colonies in the state during the summer and 80,000 to 120,000 during the winter.



- Approximately 15 to 20 non-resident beekeepers bring about 20,000 colonies to Mississippi each winter and divide them into 50,000 to 80,000 bee colonies. They then transport them back to northern states each May/June.
- Each hive has a colony including one queen bee, several hundred drones (male bees) and 60,000 workers. All worker bees are female.
- Honeybees contribute more than \$200 million annually to Mississippi agriculture through the pollination of fruits, berries, vegetables, cotton, soybeans, vegetables, peanuts and wild plants.
- About one third of the human diet can be contributed directly or indirectly to honeybee pollination.



- Honey is defined as the sweet substance produced by honeybees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of living plants. The bees collect, transform and store the honey in honeycombs.
- Honey that was still edible has been discovered in ancient tombs.
- Honey does not spoil from bacteria if packaged properly. However, it will ferment if the moisture content is too high and it is not well sealed.
- It takes bees about 30,000 trips and 50,000 miles of flying to make one pound of honey. In one hour's trip, a worker bee may visit 50 flowers.



Source: Mississippi State University & USDA-NASS



**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
& COMMERCE**

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Andy Gipson, Commissioner
Phone (601) 359-1100 · www.mdac.ms.gov