

2019 Spring Honey Bee Health Report



Between June 3 and June 14, 2019, the NYS Beekeeper Tech Team sampled 249 colonies from 27 operations across northern, central, and western New York. These samples came from 9 commercial beekeepers, 10 sideliners, and 8 hobbyists. The team inspected colonies and shipped a sample of bees from each colony to the University of Maryland to quantify *Varroa* and *Nosema* levels. This document reports the prevalence of various parasites and diseases that were found this past spring.

Varroa

Overall, mite levels were well managed in June. Colonies averaged 1.14 mites per 100 bees, and only 43 colonies (17.3%) were above the treatment threshold of 2 mites per 100 bees. Just 7 colonies (2.8%) exhibited signs of parasitic mite syndrome, an advanced stage of combined *Varroa* infestation and viral infection. Commercial colonies had the lowest average *Varroa* levels at 0.97 mites per 100 bees, and sideliners had the highest average *Varroa* levels at 1.63 mites per 100 bees.

European Foulbrood

European Foulbrood (EFB) prevalence was the highest it has been since the Tech Team program began. This past spring, they identified the disease in 26 colonies (10.4%) across 13 operations. In the prior two years, the Tech Team found EFB in less than 5% of colonies.

Nosema

The NYS Beekeeper Tech Team found *Nosema* spores in 96% of colonies sampled. While 78 colonies (31%) contained more than 1 million spores per bee, the average *Nosema* count of colonies sampled was below this economic threshold, at 0.89 million spores per bee. Although the prevalence of *Nosema* may initially appear alarming, previous data collected by the Tech Team reports most colonies are able to resolve these infections by autumn without drug intervention. More information is available in the 2018 NYS Beekeeper Tech Team Report.

Other Pests & Diseases

The Tech Team found no cases of American Foulbrood (AFB) in June of 2019. Small hive beetles were found in 4% of colonies sampled, followed by chalkbrood and deformed wings in 3.2% of colonies, parasitic mite syndrome and sacbrood virus in 2.8% of colonies, and idiopathic brood disease syndrome in 1.6% of colonies.

