

## Apiary Inspection Program

### Goal:

The goals of the apiary inspection program are to protect South Dakota's apiary (beekeeping) industry from the spread of apiary diseases such as American Foulbrood, and parasitic mites, such as the honeybee Tracheal mite and Varroa mite; to coordinate the interstate movement of bees; advise beekeepers on the identification and treatment of honeybee pests and diseases; and to promote the value of beekeeping to the residents of South Dakota and the value of the premium honey produced in the state.



### Background:

Prior to 1958, there were primarily resident, small scale beekeepers in South Dakota. Commercial migratory beekeeping began in the state between 1958 and 1962 when honey producers discovered South Dakota has the climate and soil conditions for producing top quality honey.

The state established a three-mile distance between apiaries to lessen the contact of bees between apiaries. The three-mile zone helps check the spread of diseases such as American Foulbrood, and Tracheal and Varroa mites.

## Industry Facts:

South Dakota normally ranks between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in the United States in total honey production. The ranking varies with the amount of moisture and floral sources available in a given year. In 2009, the state ranked second, producing 17.8 million pounds of honey, worth approximately \$24.7 million.

South Dakota honey is valued by packers because of its light color, and mild flavored which is attributed to clover and alfalfa as the primary nectar sources.

There are approximately 185 registered beekeepers in South Dakota. Of those, about 30% are considered commercial producers; the remaining are hobbyists. In 2009, there were approximately 290,000 colonies registered in the state.

Most commercial apiarists in the state are migratory, moving the colonies from one state to another as the seasons change. This allows the beekeepers to increase honey production, pollinate crops in other states, and over winter bees in milder climates to ensure strong colonies when they return to South Dakota the following spring for the main honey flow.

Bees play a vital role in pollinating many crops. The value of insect pollination of crops, mostly by honeybees, exceeds \$10 billion annually. Some South Dakota crops that benefit from honeybee pollination include, alfalfa, buckwheat, canola, legumes, sunflower, (pollination directly affects about 25% of the total sunflower yield), safflowers, soybeans, and many fruits and vegetables.

Honeybees also provide another often overlooked benefit to South Dakota. This is the value of the honeybee's service to wildlife in the production of food and cover.

## About Beekeeping:

Between 40,000 and 60,000 bees live in each colony. Honeybees normally perform 75% of their work within 3/4 mile of the hive, and 90% of their work within 1 mile of the hive. Bees will forage up to 1½- 2 miles or further if necessary, but efficiency decreases as distance increases.

The average annual production per hive nationwide from 2002 - 2009 is 67 pounds. The average annual production per hive in South Dakota is estimated at 71 pounds from 2002 - 2009. Beeswax is a major by-product of honey production in the state.

### Glossary:

**Colony:** A complete community of several thousand worker bees including a queen, workers and drones.

**Apiary:** A collection of bee colonies; also the area where colonies of bees are kept. Bee yard.

**Nucleus:** A small colony of bees resulting from a parent colony division.

**Honeybee Tracheal Mite:** A parasitic bee mite that causes airway obstruction in bees, weakening the bees and shortening their lifespan. This pest does not contaminate the honey.

**Varroa Mite:** An external parasite that sucks blood out of developing and adult bees, weakening or killing honeybees. No contamination of honey occurs.

**American Foulbrood:** A bacterial disease that causes bee larvae to deteriorate into a brown, stringy mass with a foul odor. Although foulbrood spores can be found in honey, they pose no threat to humans.

**Africanized Honeybees:** An undesirable subspecies of honeybees which exhibits an extremely aggressive or defensive temperament.

## Statutory and Regulatory Requirements:

State law (SDCL) 38-18 requires that all apiaries, including hobbyists', must be registered with the Department of Agriculture by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, or within 10 days after coming into possession of an apiary.

State law mandates that each commercial apiary within the state must be three or more miles from the nearest commercial apiary.

Hobbyist beekeepers that operate 5 apiaries or less are exempt from the 3-mile limit, and their apiaries can be stocked with a maximum of ten hives. Landowner-beekeepers are also exempt from the 3-mile requirement, although they must still register their hives with the Department of Agriculture. Temporary pollination permits, available from the Department of Agriculture, are also exempt from the 3-mile limit.

Movement of bees into South Dakota requires an entrance permit from the Secretary of Agriculture. This applies to queens, nucs, packages, colonies and equipment. The bee law also requires that anyone who brings bees into the state must have a health certificate from the state of origin. Those who wish to move bees out of South Dakota may use the inspection service provided by the state.

The Secretary of Agriculture or his representative has authority to inspect bee colonies to determine the presence of any bee disease or regulated pest. If unacceptable levels of disease or pest are found, the beekeeper is ordered to eliminate the problem. If a beekeeper fails to do so, the beekeeper becomes liable for all costs incurred in abating the disease pest.

## Permit/License Cost:

The registration fee, based on a per-apiary basis, covers all routine inspections and sampling. The fee is \$11 per apiary, plus \$1 per apiary for the Honey Promotion Fund. The Fund was established for honey research, education and promotion.

A beekeeper who wishes to enter into a compliance agreement to facilitate interstate movement of his bees, must submit a completed application form and a fee of \$50.

## Dates to Remember:

- February 1 – annual registration deadline.
- Entrance permit applications must be submitted 30 days in advance of expected arrival date. The Secretary of Agriculture then has 30 days to approve or disapprove a request.

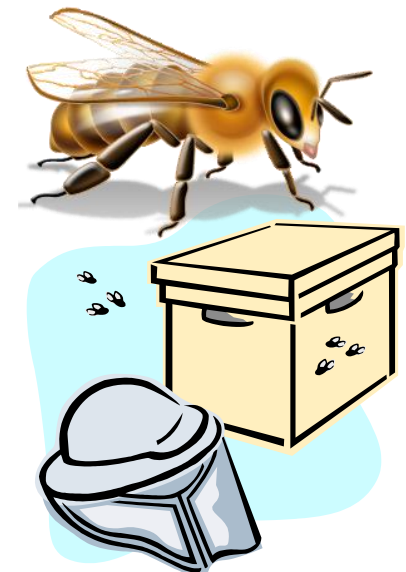


## For More Information:

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## SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### APIARY INSPECTION PROGRAM



### OFFICE OF AGRONOMY SERVICES

### DIVISION OF AGRICULTURAL SERVICES