

INDUSTRY SUMMARY · 2026

Beekeeping in Alberta

2025 INDUSTRY FIGURES

1,630
beekeepers, 10.0% of Canada

329,000
colonies, 38.5% of Canada

15,520 t
honey produced, 40.7% of Canada

$77.0M
honey production value, 31.9% of Canada

Canola needs bees

Southern Alberta grows most of Canada's hybrid canola seed, and seed companies hire bees to set it.

Hybrid canola seed
about 65,000 acres, 2025

Seed companies contract 53,000 to 72,000 honey bee colonies a year, at 1 to 1.5 colonies an acre.

Pedigreed seed acres inspected; colony count published 2018.

Commodity canola
Alberta's main honey crop

Honey bees work commercial canola fields at no charge to the grower. A yield benefit exists; its size on current hybrids is unresolved.

AAFC estimates honey bee pollination adds about $7 billion a year in additional harvest value to Canadian crops, including hybrid canola seed (2021 estimate).

Commercial beekeeping

Commercial operations run most of Alberta's colonies. The 79 operations with 100 or more colonies that answered the 2026 winter-loss survey had wintered 221,860 colonies, 73% of the province's total.

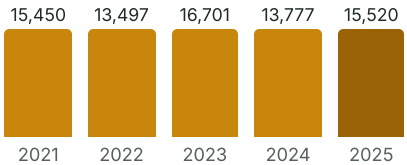
Alberta honey

Canola
White honey that granulates quickly; most is sold creamed.

Clover and sweet clover
Light, mild honey from roadsides, pastures and hay land.

Alfalfa
Light honey from hay and seed fields.

HONEY PRODUCTION, TONNES



Alberta produces about 15,000 t of honey a year, 41% of Canada's crop in 2025. The three Prairie provinces together produce 80%.

The crop varies from year to year: from 13,500 t in 2022 to 16,700 t in 2023.

Production value worked out to about $2.25 a pound in 2025. Most of the crop is exported: Japan took 68% and the United States 27% of Alberta's $18 million in honey exports in 2022.

Honey production averages about 47 kg per colony in Alberta, compared with 45 kg nationally.

Replacing winter losses

Alberta beekeepers rebuild each spring by splitting colonies and buying imported queens and package bees. Canada imports more than 300,000 queens a year, over 80% of them American. Its 35,000 or so packages a year all come from outside North America.

Hive losses, winter 2025-26




A prairie bee yard


Honey bee on sweet clover


Honey bee on alfalfa

Prepared by the Canadian Beekeepers Federation · canadianbeekeepers.ca