INDUSTRY SUMMARY · 2026

Beekeeping in Nova Scotia

2025 INDUSTRY FIGURES

931
beekeepers, 5.7% of Canada

27,731
colonies, 3.2% of Canada

175 t
honey produced, 0.5% of Canada

$1.9M
honey production value, 0.8% of Canada

Pollination comes first

Most Nova Scotia colonies are rented to pollinate wild blueberries and apples. In 2017, 18,743 of the province's 25,750 hives went to pollination, at an average rent of $138 a hive.

Wild blueberry
35,814 acres in 2021

22% of Canada's lowbush blueberry area, the third largest in the country.

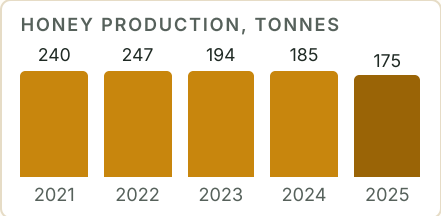
Apple
4,924 acres in 2021

The fourth largest apple area in Canada, up 11.5% since 2016.

Not enough hives

Growers have reported a gap of about 5,000 hives at blueberry bloom. The province's Apiculture Sustainable Growth and Health Program, under the federal-provincial Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, pays $200 for each additional hive used for pollination and helps buy packages, queens and nucs, up to $50,000 per beekeeper (2024 terms).

A shrinking honey crop



Nova Scotia produced about 175 t of honey in 2025, 0.5% of Canada's crop.

The crop has fallen every year since 2022, while colony numbers held between 26,000 and 31,000.

The Bee Industry Act

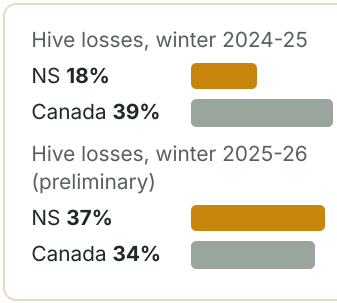
- **Every beekeeper must register** within 10 days of getting bees and renew by November 1 each year. Hives carry the beekeeper's code, at least 2.5 cm high, on one hive in each apiary.
- **An import permit is needed for any bees or used equipment** brought into the province. The permit is free.
- **Reportable diseases and pests must be reported within 2 days**, including American foulbrood, small hive beetle and tracheal mite.
- **Most queens come from abroad.** In 2017 beekeepers imported about 4,500 queens from New Zealand, Hawaii, California and Chile, against 356 from elsewhere in Canada.


Hives at a farm in Newport


Apple orchard, Annapolis Valley

WINTERING INDOORS

58% of surveyed colonies wintered indoors in 2024-25, second only to Quebec. Indoor colonies lost 13%, against 25% outdoors.



NOVA SCOTIA BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

A volunteer organization representing the province's bees and beekeepers: mentors, swarm removal, bear fencing, help setting up a vet relationship and a cost-of-production model. nsbeekeepers.ca

Sources: AAFC, Statistical overview of the Canadian honey and bee industry, 2025 (industry figures) · Statistics Canada, Lowbush blueberries, apples, mink and poultry play a large role in Nova Scotia farming (2022) · Sproule J, NSDA report on the status of the NS honey bee industry (2018) (pollination hives, rent, queen imports) · CBC, Nova Scotia blueberry producers say more honey bees essential (hive gap) · Province of Nova Scotia, More support for Nova Scotia beekeepers (2024) · Bee Industry Act, Bee Industry Regulations and Honey Bees Import Permit (rules) · CAPA final report 2025 and preliminary report 2026 (wintering, hive losses) · NSBA. Photos via Wikimedia Commons: Dennis G. Jarvis, CC BY-SA 2.0 (blueberry fields in autumn, Parrsboro); Nicole Bratt, CC BY-SA 2.0 (hives); MikeyMoose, CC BY-SA 3.0 (orchard).

Prepared by the Canadian Beekeepers Federation · canadianbeekeepers.ca