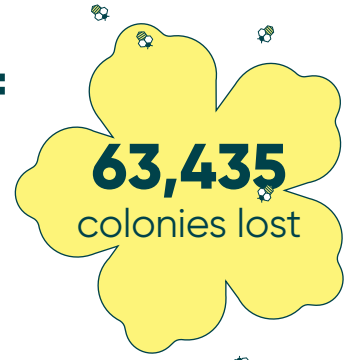
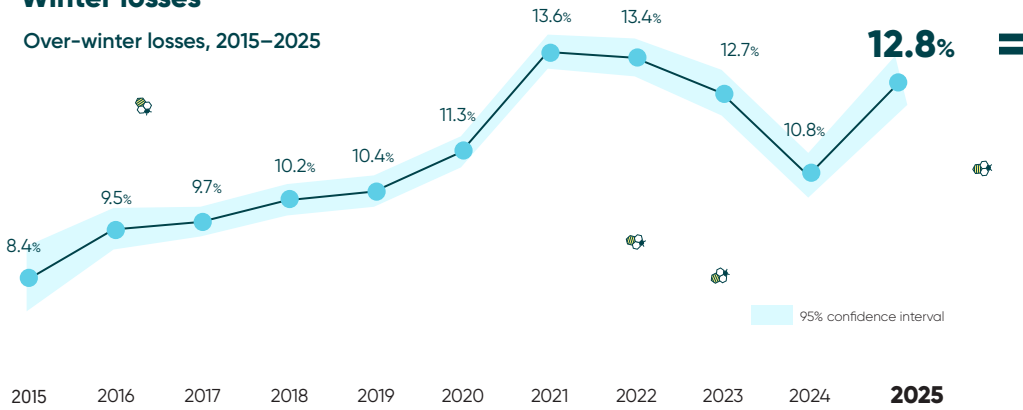


NEW ZEALAND COLONY LOSS SURVEY 2025 SURVEY

Summary of results

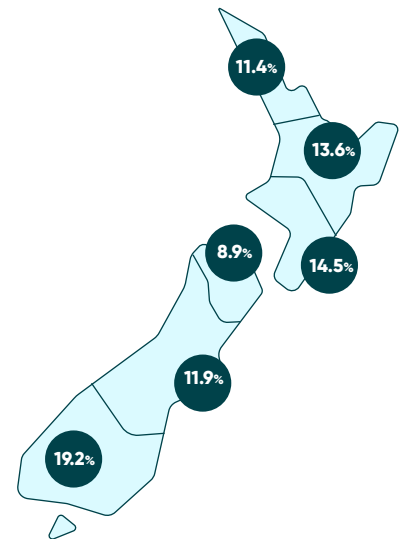
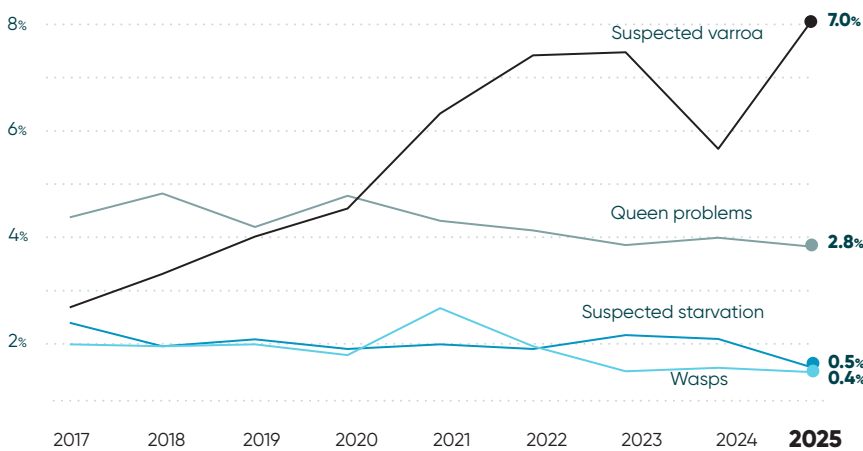
Winter losses

Over-winter losses, 2015–2025



Average loss rates by region

Estimated percent of all living colonies entering winter lost to specific causes, 2017–2025



Wasp control

Beekeepers who:

Controlled wasps



Directly killed wasp nests **41%**

Indirectly killed wasp nests (e.g. poison baits) **33%**

Trapped wasps **49%**

12,200
wasp nests

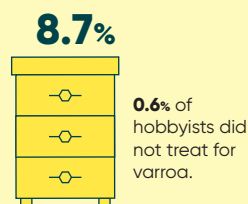


Estimated to have been killed by NZ beekeepers between spring 2024 and winter 2025.

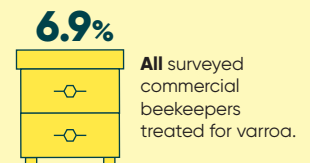
Varroa management in 2025

Average over-winter varroa loss rates

Hobbyist (1–49 colonies)



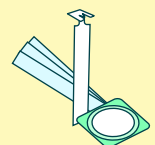
Commercial (50+ colonies)



Hobbyists are:

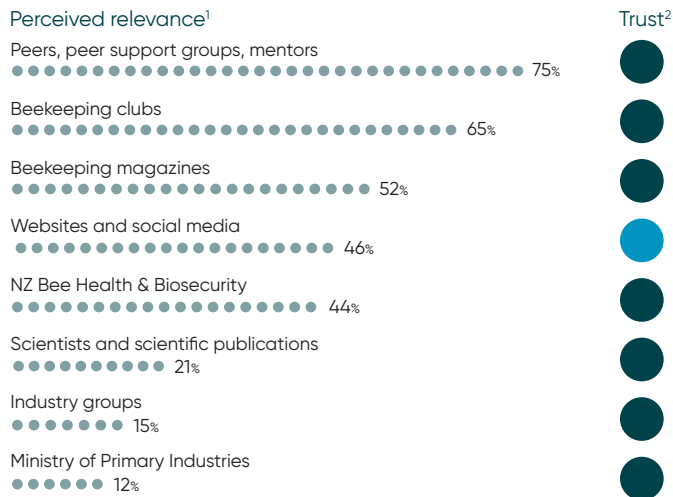
3.5 times as likely as commercial beekeepers to have treated varroa only once.

2.4 times as likely as commercial beekeepers to have used only one treatment type.

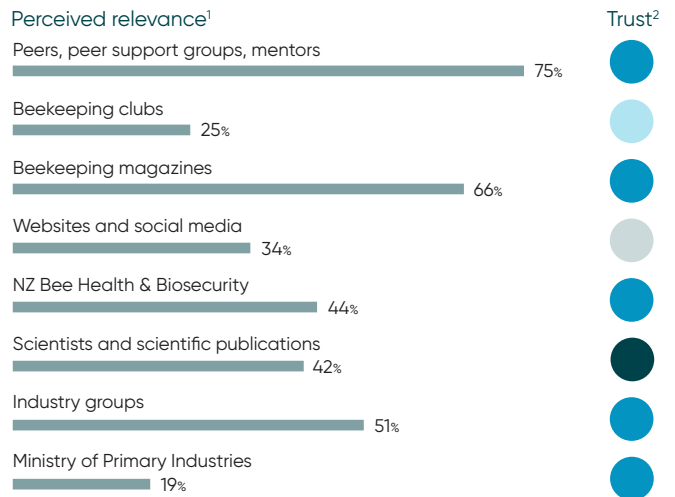


Seeking advice

Hobbyist beekeepers (1-49 colonies)

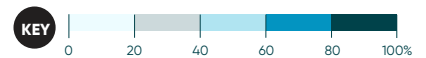


Commercial beekeepers (50+ colonies)

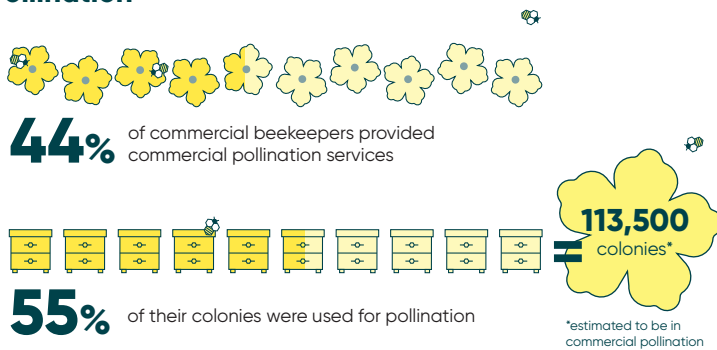


¹Relevance – % Respondents who thought each source could provide advice for their beekeeping operation

²Trust – % Respondents who have high trust in the advice provided by the source (if they think the source is relevant)

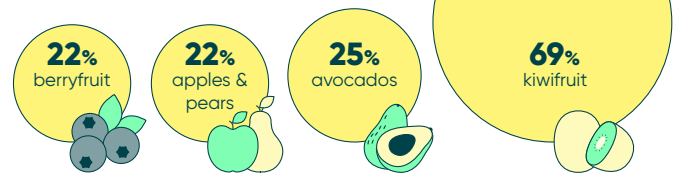


Pollination



The average colony commercially pollinated

1.4 crops



In a 'queen cell'

We surveyed 1,948 beekeepers, who collectively had 148,460 colonies. We estimate that 12.8% of New Zealand's colonies were lost in New Zealand during winter 2025. This means 63,435 colonies died over winter 2025, from a total of 495,587. This higher loss rate reverses recent trends of declining colony loss rates, although colony loss rates remain below their 2021 peak. As with the previous winter, loss rates over winter 2025 were highest in the Lower South Island.

Commercial beekeepers (50+ colonies) represent about 10% of all registered beekeepers and manage about 95% of all registered colonies. Hobbyist beekeepers (1-49 colonies) represent 77% of all registered beekeepers and manage 5% of all registered colonies. About 13% of registered beekeepers do not currently keep bees.

Higher loss rates were driven by varroa, which was estimated to cause the loss of 7.0% of all healthy, living colonies over winter 2025 (compared to 4.6% over winter 2024). Commercial beekeepers reported losing 6.9% of all colonies to varroa while hobbyist beekeepers reported losing 8.7%, a striking difference of 26%. Potential reasons for the higher loss rates to varroa among hobbyist beekeepers include not treating for varroa between spring 2024 and winter 2025 (0.6% of hobbyist beekeepers vs 0% of commercial beekeepers), treating once during this period (22% vs 6%), and using only one type of treatment (31% vs 13%).

Beekeepers attributed 0.4% of winter losses to wasps. Just under half of all beekeepers reported that they controlled wasps

between spring 2024 and winter 2025. Among them, 41% directly killed wasp nests (e.g. applying powdered insecticides at the nest entrance), 33% indirectly killed wasp nests (e.g. using poisoned baits that adult wasps carry back to the nest), and 49% reported trapping wasps using commercial or home-made traps. Five beekeepers estimated that they eliminated at least 500 wasp nests during the previous season!

The 2025 survey asked beekeepers about the relevance and trustworthiness of different sources of advice on beekeeping. Commercial beekeepers considered peers and mentors to be the most relevant sources of advice, followed by beekeeping magazines and industry groups. Hobbyist beekeepers considered peers and mentors to be the most relevant sources of advice, followed by beekeeping clubs and beekeeping magazines. For both groups, the most trusted source of advice were scientists and NZ Bee Health and Biosecurity.

i For more information

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Data summary commissioned by
Ministry for Primary Industries

View additional results at:
www.landcareresearch.co.nz/bee-health

