

An important message about bees from Tillamook Beekeepers Association

By Brad York

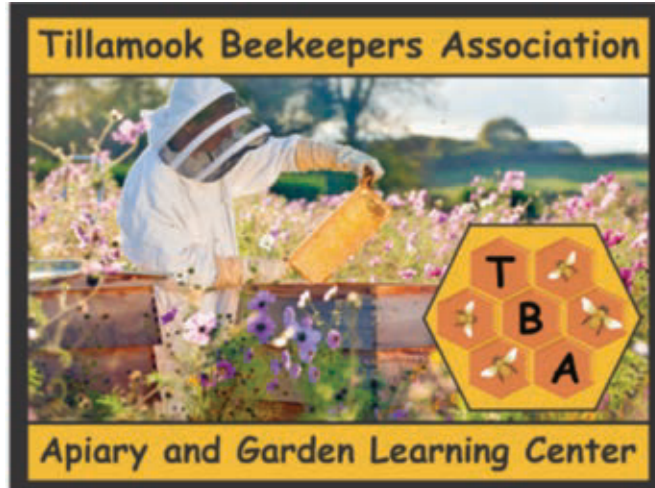
Last year, beekeepers across the country suffered the worst loss in recorded history. An estimated 1.7 million colonies of bees died in the first few weeks of 2025. In Tillamook, we lost 60% of our hives. Industry experts including our own OSU Bee Laboratory, Project Apis m., the



American Beekeeping Federation, the American Honey Producers Association, apiculture extension programs, and beekeepers came together for the rapid collection of real-time information, launching emergency surveys to document the scale and distribution of the losses.

The conclusion indicates the 4 P's are the cause. Pesticides, Parasites, Pathogens, and Poor Nutrition.

Pesticides: Beekeepers continue to walk a tightrope: participating in an agricultural system that depends on pest control, while needing safe forage and access to pasture outside these systems to maintain healthy



bees. Pollinator exposure to pesticides remains a critical problem. Please do not spray when flowers are in bloom, if at all.

Parasites: The Varroa Destructor Mite remains the highest ranked threat. As beekeepers, we are doing everything we can to deal with this threat. Integrated pest management with several available resources is our constant battle cry.



Resistance to some of the treatments is now emerging, and we seek to add options to decrease reliance on the treatments we have used successfully for several years.



Pathogens: Viruses vectored by these mites are key players in 2025's mystery losses. Unfortunately, looking at sick hives is often too little and too late to understand the complete picture of what went wrong to improve the outcomes. Much more research is needed.

Poor Nutrition: Bees survive on the nectar and pollen from flowers, and simply put there is a tremendous lack of pollinator-friendly

flowers nationwide, even here in Tillamook. We cannot emphasize the problem enough. Green grass lawns are a wasteland for honey bees, consider planting more bee-friendly flowering shrubs and less grass. The Tillamook Beekeepers Apiary and Garden Learning Center is our working laboratory and demonstration garden for bee friendly flowers, annuals, perennial shrubs, trees, and herbs. Our website at www.tillamook-beekeepers.org is also a resource to discover plants that you can grow in your own yards to help bees find the nutrition they need to survive.



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Bee Days 2026

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Tillamook County Fairgrounds

Visit us at the Home and Garden Show and learn more about what we are doing. Get more involved, volunteer to help us at our Garden Learning Center, or just support our ongoing efforts.

This year's raffle hive follows the theme of America's 250th Anniversary. Tickets are on sale at our website for \$5 each or five for \$20. The funds raised from the sale of these tickets go towards our ongoing efforts to help save the honey bee in Tillamook. The hive will be raffled off on Sunday of the Home and Garden Show.

Again, we will have a live bee observation hive, crafts, and a myriad of information for children and adults alike. Saving the honey bee is our goal and we want to inform the public as much as possible with ways everyone can implement.

