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Statistical Overview of the Canadian Honey and Bee Industry 2019

Prepared by:
Crops and Horticulture Division
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
June 2020



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Table of Contents

Overview	1
1. Production	3
1.1. Number of beekeepers by province	3
1.2. Number of beekeepers by province – percent share, 2019	3
1.3. Number of colonies by province	4
1.4. Number of colonies by province – percent share, 2019	4
1.5. Number of beekeepers and number of colonies by province	5
1.6. Total honey production by province – thousands of pounds	6
1.7. Total honey production by province – percent share, 2019	6
1.8. Production value of honey by province – thousands of Canadian dollars	7
1.9. Production value of honey by province – percent share, 2019	7
2. Trade	8
2.1. Trade balance	8
2.1.1. Canada’s honey trade balance – thousands of Canadian dollars	8
2.2. Exports	9
2.2.1. Canada’s honey exports by province – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)	9
2.2.2. Canada’s honey exports by province – percent share, 2019	9
2.2.3. Canada’s honey exports by province - quantity (metric tonnes)	10
2.2.4. Canada’s top 10 honey export destinations – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)	10
2.2.5. Canada’s top honey export destinations by country – percent share, 2019	11
2.2.6. Canada’s top 10 honey export destinations – quantity (metric tonnes)	11
2.3. Imports	12
2.3.1. Canada’s honey imports by province – value (Canadian dollars)	12
2.3.2. Canada’s honey imports by province – percent share, 2019	12
2.3.3. Canada’s honey imports by province – quantity (kilograms)	13
2.3.4. Canada’s top 10 sources of honey imports – value (Canadian dollars)	13
2.3.5. Canada’s top sources of honey imports by country – percent share, 2019	14
2.3.6. Canada’s top 10 sources of honey imports – quantity (kilograms)	14
2.3.8. Canada’s sources of queen bee imports – value (Canadian dollars)	15
3. Consumption	16
3.1. Honey available for consumption in Canada – kilograms per person	16
4. World data	17
4.1. Top 10 producers of honey worldwide – quantity (metric tonnes)	17
4.2. Top 10 honey-producing countries, 2018	17
4.3. Top 10 exporters of honey worldwide – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)	18
4.4. Top 10 honey-exporting countries, 2019	18
4.5. Top 10 importers of honey worldwide – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)	19
4.6. Top 10 honey-importing countries, 2019	19
6. Key Resources	20



Overview

Beekeeping is an important agricultural industry in Canada, producing honey and other hive products, and delivering valuable pollination services to farmers of orchard fruits, many berries, vegetables, forage, and the production of hybrid canola seed. In 2017, AAFC estimated that the total annual economic contribution of honey bee pollination through direct additional harvest value was about \$2.57 billion. When the estimated contribution of honey bee pollination to the production of hybrid canola seed is added, the total estimated contribution ranges from \$4.0 to \$5.5 billion per year.

Looking forward to the 2020 beekeeping season, the disruptions in travel and transportation related to COVID-19 will negatively affect the beekeeping industry in Canada. Limited or non-existent travel options for Seasonal and Temporary Foreign Workers prevented or delayed the arrival of the workforce critical to beekeeping operations. COVID-related transportation disruptions affected the supply of replacement queen and package bees. These important supplies are shipped from a limited number of approved places including Australia, New Zealand, California and Hawaii, and arrive in the early spring to address hive losses and replace weak queen bees after the winter has passed. More details will be available in the 2020 Statistical Overview of the Canadian Honey and Bee Industry.

After a steady increase over the past 5 years, the number of beekeepers in Canada fell 3% from a year earlier to 10,344 in 2019. Beekeepers with operations of all sizes are counted, including those with as few as one hive (or colony). British Columbia (2,763) and Ontario (2,506) have the highest numbers of beekeepers. Alberta leads in the average number of hives per beekeeper, with 206, almost three times the national average of 75 hives per beekeeper.

After more than a decade of steady growth in total honey bee colony numbers, the number of colonies in Canada declined 2.1% from a year earlier to 773,182 in 2019. The contraction was primarily due to sustained weather unfavourable to honey bees including a cold wet spring in many parts of Canada.

The majority of honey bee colonies are kept in the Prairies, where long summer days and a favourable crop mix are ideal for foraging. Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba collectively accounted for 69% of the country's total honey bee colonies and for 79% of total honey production. Alberta contributed the most to Canada's overall honey production (31%), followed by Saskatchewan (25%) and Manitoba (23%).

Total honey production in Canada fell 15.4% from a year earlier to 80.4 million pounds in 2019 in the wake of a cold, wet spring and summer on the Prairies. Cold wet weather affects the availability of honey bee forage such as canola flowers, and limits the numbers of dry warm days in which bees can fly and gather nectar and pollen. Because of this, the industry produced its lowest total quantity of honey in seven years. For example, Alberta, the largest honey-producing province, production fell 35.0% to 25.1 million pounds, the lowest level in the province since 2000.

Despite relatively higher prices for honey produced in Canada in 2019, the total estimated value of the honey produced in Canada was down 14% from 2018 to \$173.0 million in 2019, its lowest total value in three years.

While Canadian beekeepers routinely produce more honey than can be consumed domestically, a growing proportion of Canadian production is consumed domestically, reducing surpluses available for export. With a reduced total harvest in 2019, this further reduced the volume of honey available for export. In 2019, exports of Canadian honey totaled nearly \$54 million, down 31% from 2018. Exports to the United States, the largest export destination for Canadian honey, fell 46% from a year earlier to \$34 million in 2019. The second and third largest honey export destinations are Japan (33%) and China (3%), respectively.

Canada imported \$45 million worth of honey by value in 2019, up 23% from 2018. Honey from New Zealand topped the list of imported honey by value with a total import value of \$17.5 million. Most imports from New



Zealand are high-priced Manuka honey. Brazil was the second largest source of imported honey, primarily certified organic honey, valued at \$6.9 million.



1. Production

1.1. Number of beekeepers¹ by province

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prince Edward Island	45	40	46	50	50
Nova Scotia	395	451	604	631	690
New Brunswick	291	351	374	388	415
Quebec	333	384	402	425	440
Ontario	2,562	2,896	3,331	3,026	2,506
Manitoba	607	662	746	834	905
Saskatchewan	955	1,150	1,044	1,059	1,101
Alberta	1,064	1,453	1,402	1,572	1,474
British Columbia	2,363	2,640	2,640	2,676	2,763
Canada²	8,615	10,027	10,589	10,661	10,344

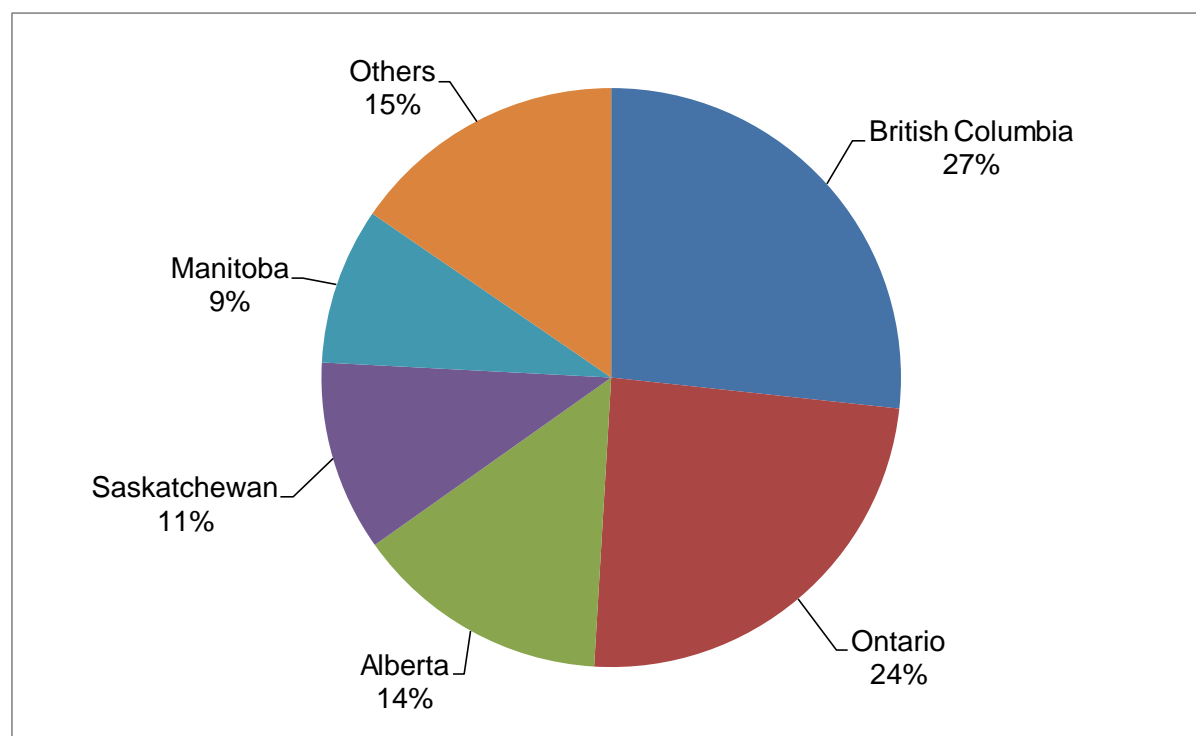
Notes:

1. Beekeeper numbers may include providers of pollination services.

2. Newfoundland and Labrador is excluded since the province has no honey production to report.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey

1.2. Number of beekeepers by province – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey



1.3. Number of colonies¹ by province

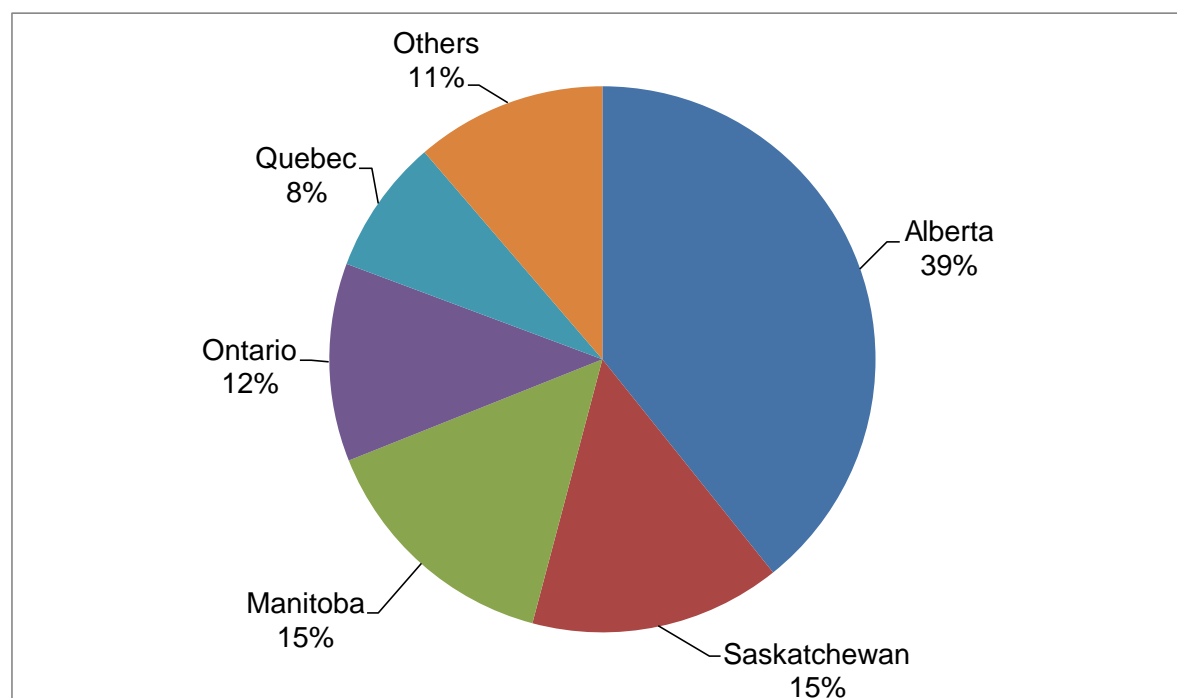
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prince Edward Island	4,005	4,920	6,300	4,453	4,453
Nova Scotia	25,504	31,080	26,426	25,446	20,805
New Brunswick	6,710	7,000	7,100	8,141	6,300
Quebec	54,294	64,426	61,020	60,439	62,000
Ontario	101,135	97,342	105,244	100,413	90,675
Manitoba	90,909	102,030	111,802	114,098	114,668
Saskatchewan	101,000	112,000	115,000	114,000	115,000
Alberta	296,880	309,000	317,000	311,000	303,500
British Columbia	45,571	39,885	40,776	52,033	55,781
Canada²	726,008	767,683	790,668	790,023	773,182

Notes:

1. Colony numbers may include providers of pollination services.
2. Newfoundland and Labrador is excluded since the province has no honey production to report.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey

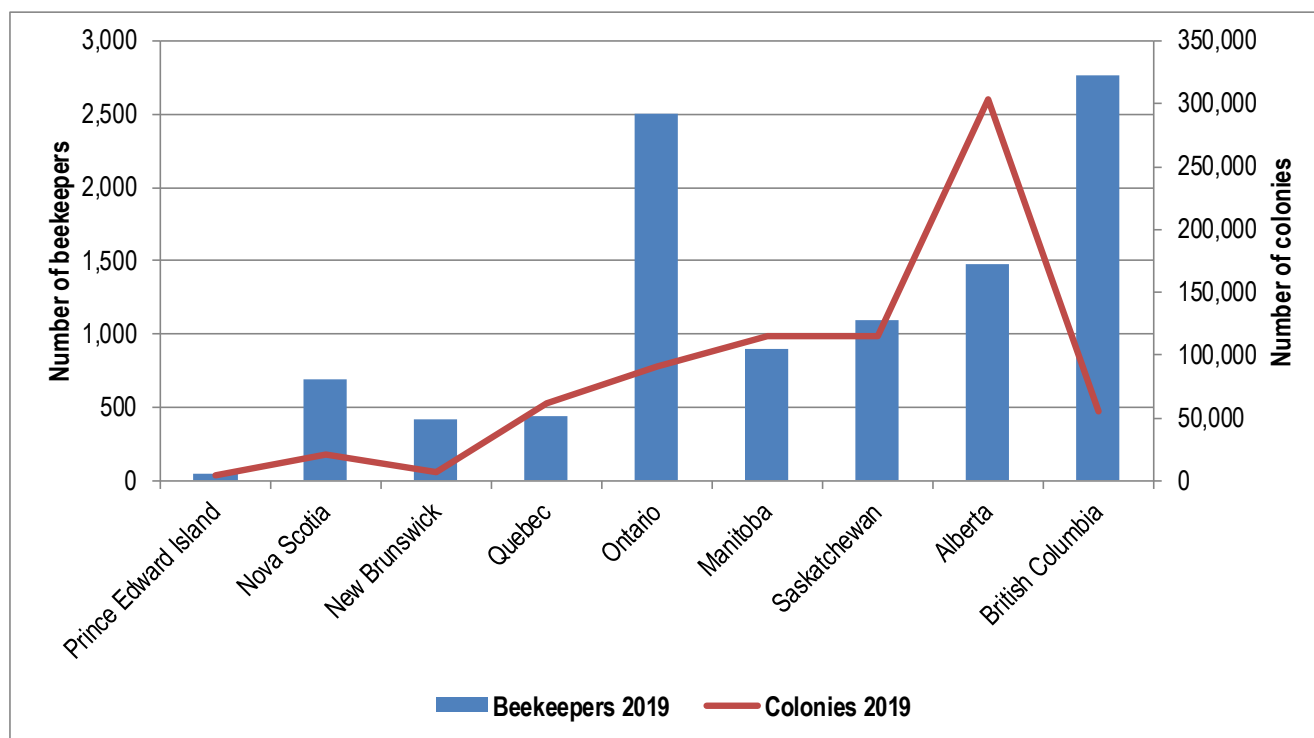
1.4. Number of colonies by province – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey



1.5. Number of beekeepers and number of colonies by province



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey



1.6. Total honey production¹ by province – thousands of pounds

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prince Edward Island	168	162	231	168	225
Nova Scotia	411	588	553	522	418
New Brunswick	276	287	201	469	285
Quebec	4,194	4,507	3,723	4,472	4,408
Ontario	8,972	8,880	6,087	8,174	7,445
Manitoba	16,000	15,202	19,120	18,710	18,350
Saskatchewan	18,837	22,848	21,965	20,520	20,240
Alberta	39,461	40,170	40,576	38,564	25,067
British Columbia	3,692	1,934	3,556	3,397	3,907
Canada²	92,011	94,578	96,012	94,996	80,345

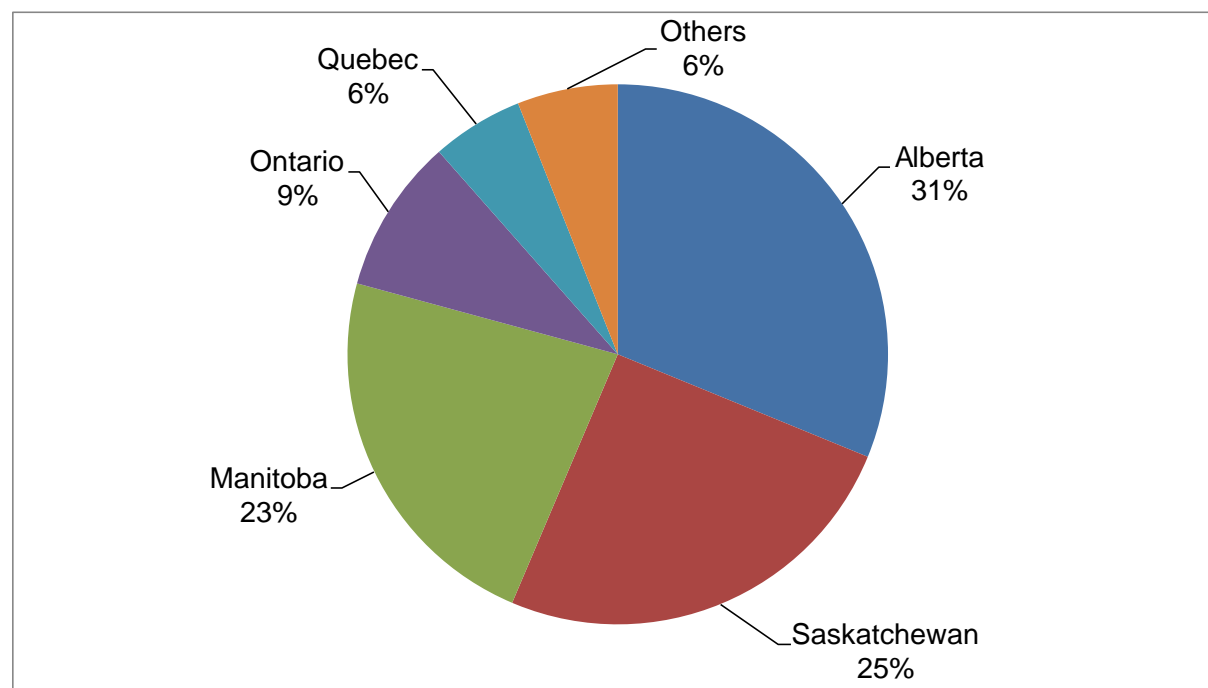
Notes:

1. Production excludes inventory.

2. Newfoundland and Labrador is excluded since the province has limited beekeeping.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey

1.7. Total honey production by province – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey



1.8. Production value¹ of honey by province – thousands of Canadian dollars

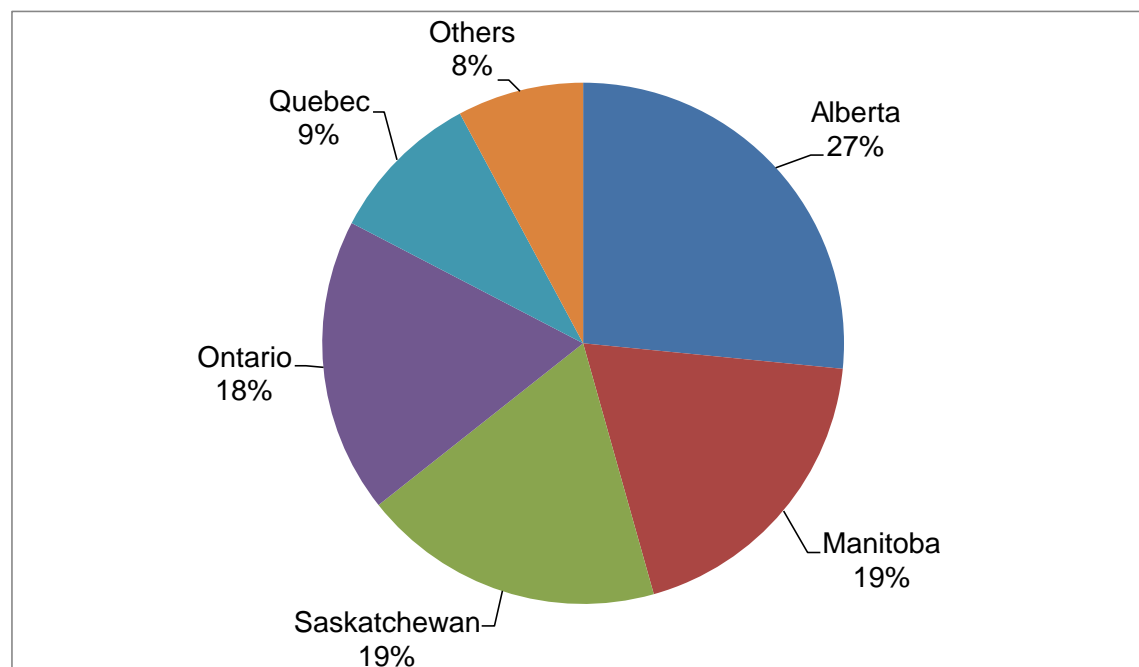
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prince Edward Island	579	445	666	393	524
Nova Scotia	1,343	1,686	1,586	1,574	1,117
New Brunswick	740	661	511	1,430	869
Quebec	13,905	15,074	15,120	16,655	16,500
Ontario	31,119	31,966	20,257	34,329	31,643
Manitoba	32,400	21,000	32,268	32,786	32,997
Saskatchewan	26,372	27,418	34,045	33,858	32,384
Alberta	84,555	62,388	71,359	66,472	45,962
British Columbia	19,471	8,622	14,292	13,320	11,040
Canada²	210,483	169,260	190,104	200,816	173,036

Notes:

1. Value excludes inventory sales except for in Quebec.
2. Newfoundland and Labrador is excluded since the province has limited beekeeping.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey

1.9. Production value of honey by province – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey



2. Trade

2.1. Trade balance

2.1.1. Canada's honey trade balance – thousands of Canadian dollars

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Export	64,883	71,838	76,986	78,018	53,827
Import	41,214	38,064	41,284	36,996	45,394
Trade Balance (Exports - Imports)	23,669	33,774	35,702	41,023	8,433

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



2.2. Exports

2.2.1. Canada's honey exports by province¹ – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)

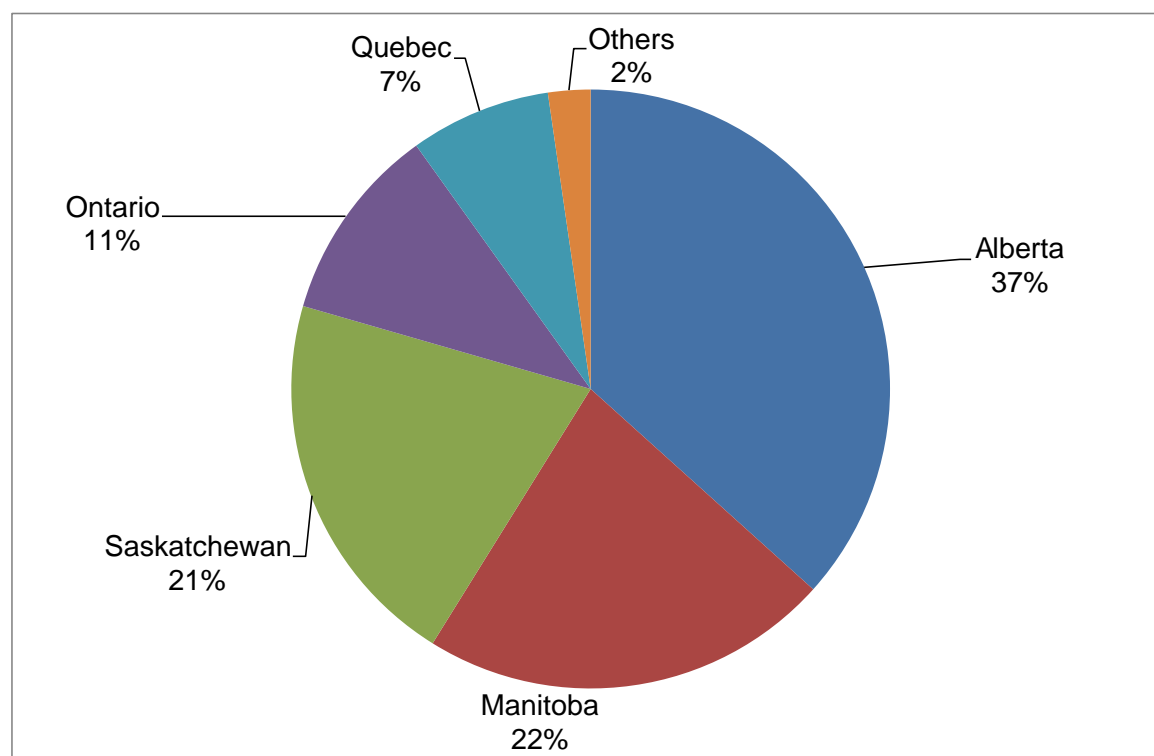
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prince Edward Island	34	78	0	0	0
Nova Scotia	2	61	126	15	60
Quebec	6,480	6,158	5,446	4,602	4,098
Ontario	2,735	2,212	3,864	6,367	5,722
Manitoba	17,745	17,060	19,310	13,033	11,943
Saskatchewan	15,640	11,346	19,928	20,511	11,097
Alberta	20,499	33,433	27,150	31,751	19,735
British Columbia	1,748	1,490	1,160	1,739	1,172
Canada	64,883	71,838	76,986	78,018	53,827

Note:

1. Exports may include honey not produced in that province.

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

2.2.2. Canada's honey exports by province – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



2.2.3. Canada's honey exports by province - quantity (metric tonnes)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prince Edward Island	6	14	0	0	0
Nova Scotia	0	7	22	2	7
Québec	1,116	1,021	1,006	838	611
Ontario	360	378	828	1,219	1,006
Manitoba	3,316	4,580	5,242	3,160	2,957
Saskatchewan	2,999	3,551	5,541	5,127	2,735
Alberta	3,640	8,113	6,372	7,959	4,358
British Columbia	264	215	186	284	171
Total	11,701	17,879	19,196	18,589	11,845

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

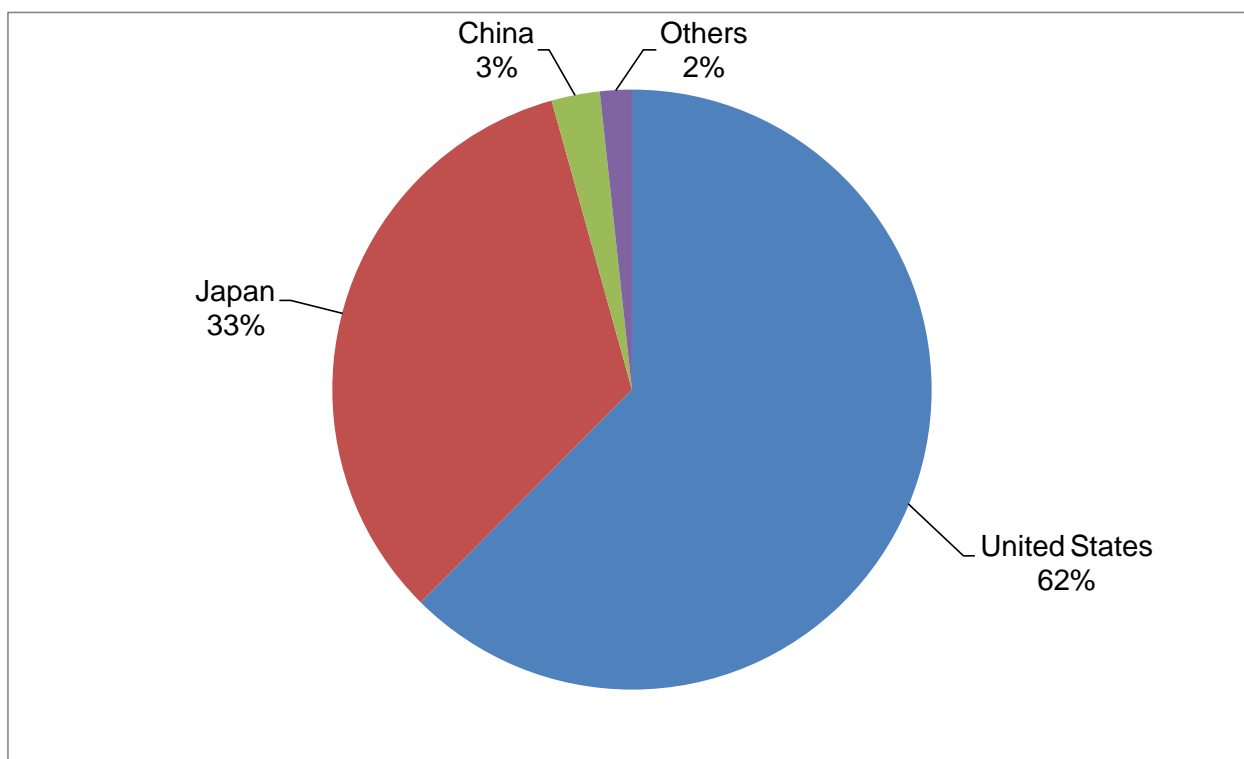
2.2.4. Canada's top 10 honey export destinations – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
United States	44,541	50,894	60,878	62,012	33,615
Japan	16,176	17,045	12,432	12,643	17,884
China	2,522	2,396	1,981	1,903	1,403
South Korea	751	559	550	696	503
Hong Kong	287	271	460	347	154
Barbados	55	56	63	25	62
Taiwan	23	54	20	30	48
Belgium	0	0	0	0	37
Lebanon	32	20	28	19	25
Jordan	0	64	14	0	20
Others	496	480	560	343	76
Total	64,883	71,838	76,986	78,018	53,827

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



2.2.5. Canada's top honey export destinations by country – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

2.2.6. Canada's top 10 honey export destinations – quantity (metric tonnes)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
United States	8,234	13,553	15,762	15,222	7,870
Japan	2,810	3,719	2,799	2,785	3,575
China	402	323	323	326	209
Korea, South	116	105	109	124	128
Hong Kong	43	40	72	55	19
Barbados	9	10	11	4	11
Taiwan	5	10	4	5	9
Jordan	0	12	3	0	5
Belgium	0	0	0	0	5
Lebanon	4	2	4	3	3
Others	77	104	110	65	12
Total	11,701	17,879	19,196	18,589	11,845

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



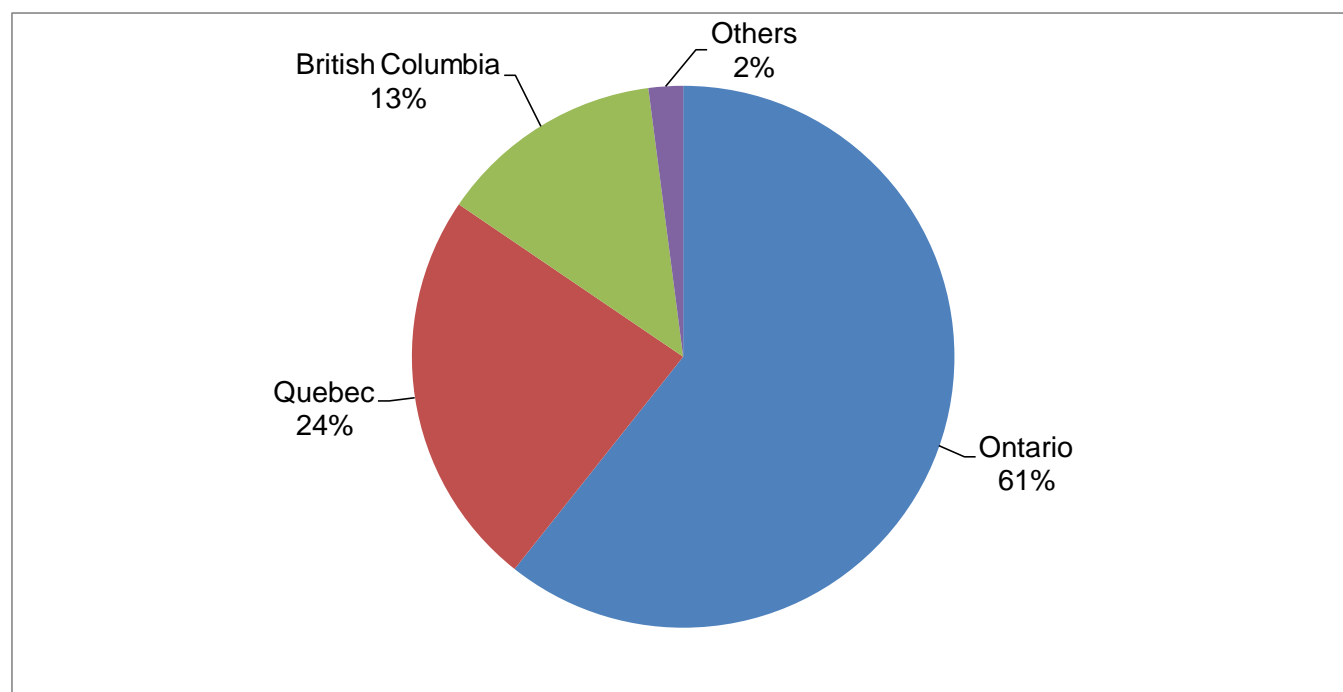
2.3. Imports

2.3.1. Canada's honey imports by province – value (Canadian dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Nova Scotia	408	2,062	8,467	2,151	73,381
New Brunswick	113	216	7,236	30,121	6,999
Quebec	14,004,883	13,932,715	12,355,678	10,782,711	10,816,955
Ontario	21,683,754	17,958,821	24,630,510	19,892,413	27,542,742
Manitoba	453,018	305,147	71,679	15,403	44,322
Saskatchewan	53,687	13,854	4,800	20,361	69,443
Alberta	813,019	1,165,645	27,557	838,835	737,141
British Columbia	4,205,137	4,685,144	4,178,387	5,413,726	6,102,715
Total	41,214,019	38,063,604	41,284,314	36,995,721	45,393,989

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

2.3.2. Canada's honey imports by province – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



2.3.3. Canada's honey imports by province – quantity (kilograms)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Nova Scotia	60	317	790	420	21,805
New Brunswick	9	51	291	3,193	316
Québec	3,219,694	3,417,813	2,633,238	2,501,290	2,964,758
Ontario	3,552,517	2,476,506	3,585,028	2,400,182	3,155,120
Manitoba	53,698	39,739	9,204	1,176	5,224
Saskatchewan	5,583	936	313	1,359	2,333
Alberta	99,573	223,966	3,407	24,344	24,643
British Columbia	384,940	400,887	418,136	369,514	409,796
Canada	7,316,074	6,560,215	6,650,407	5,301,478	6,584,014

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

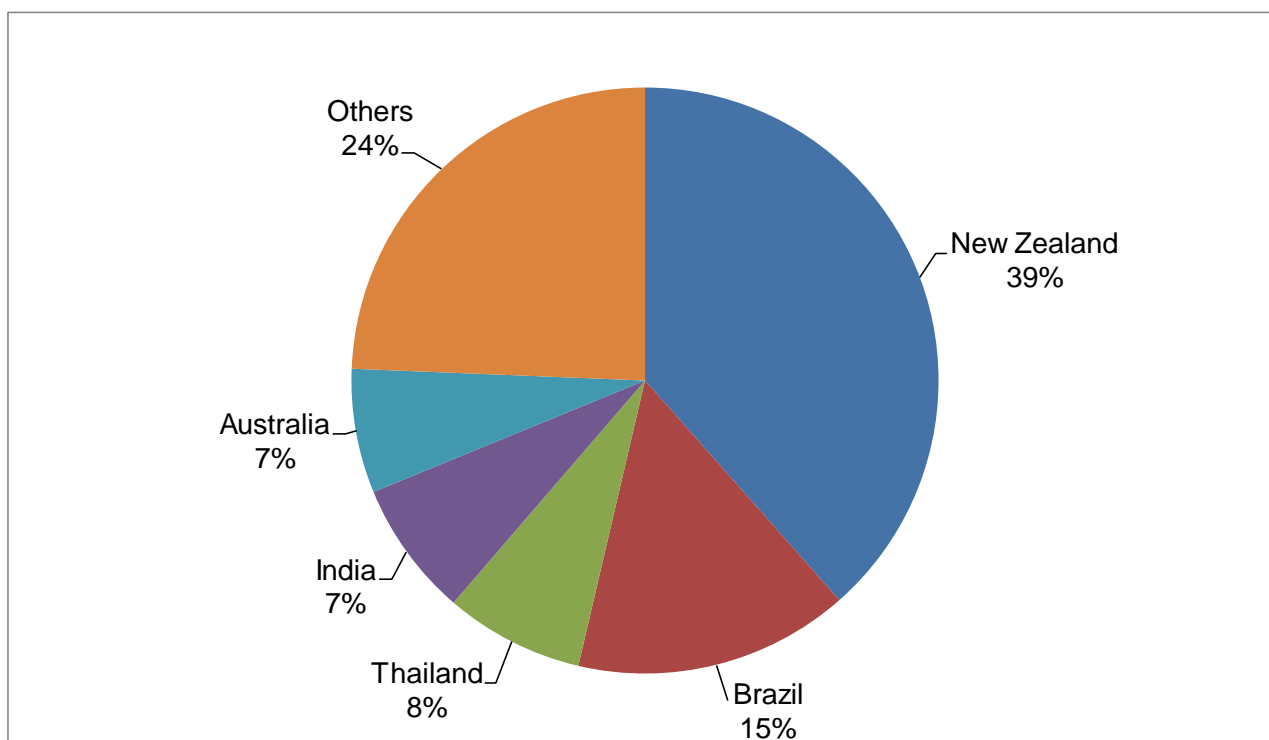
2.3.4. Canada's top 10 sources of honey imports – value (Canadian dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
New Zealand	7,483,814	7,120,281	9,560,170	12,799,222	17,470,382
Brazil	7,307,083	10,515,234	7,384,459	4,226,571	6,882,630
Thailand	2,585,800	808,688	1,855,794	4,011,223	3,476,340
India	1,036,187	1,550,297	2,017,945	2,315,223	3,397,364
Australia	4,249,661	3,629,420	3,102,488	2,996,890	3,110,225
Spain	3,270,807	3,024,203	3,120,697	1,490,462	2,606,030
United States	6,161,862	4,207,803	2,667,256	3,285,023	2,537,365
Saudi Arabia	366,877	780,354	951,138	958,894	1,297,348
Greece	1,399,416	1,171,384	1,226,620	1,290,162	1,282,118
Ukraine	607,767	858,053	1,075,002	152,312	448,530
Others	6,744,745	4,397,887	8,322,745	3,469,739	2,885,657
Total	41,214,019	38,063,604	41,284,314	36,995,721	45,393,989

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



2.3.5. Canada's top sources of honey imports by country – percent share, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

2.3.6. Canada's top 10 sources of honey imports – quantity (kilograms)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Brazil	1,528,830	2,134,017	1,279,957	968,574	1,877,520
India	222,511	429,116	505,506	745,286	1,091,658
Thailand	764,835	230,849	483,515	970,078	891,102
United States	938,727	652,406	468,534	586,715	574,500
Spain	766,116	646,681	734,823	314,974	529,098
New Zealand	292,186	298,498	346,451	349,397	412,172
Australia	506,390	393,654	333,891	323,392	279,490
Greece	253,231	164,416	177,721	137,907	142,340
Ukraine	155,262	325,126	352,820	39,568	137,674
Saudi Arabia	36,484	79,207	103,937	101,790	129,518
Others	1,851,502	1,206,245	1,863,252	763,797	518,942
Total	7,316,074	6,560,215	6,650,407	5,301,478	6,584,014

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



2.3.7. Canada's sources of honey bee imports – value (Canadian dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
New Zealand	3,601,795	2,752,912	1,510,369	1,278,340	1,988,220
Australia	1,275,366	559,584	331,206	853,887	1,255,269
Chile	0	0	316,067	651,930	167,180
Denmark	0	9,428	0	0	0
United States	223942	249614	0	0	0
Total	5,101,103	3,571,538	2,157,642	2,784,157	3,410,677

Notes:

Package bees are sold in a variety of sizes typically one pound, two pound and three pound packages. No detail on the individual numbers of different package sizes is available.

Does not include queen bees and live bees that are not honey bees.

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)

2.3.8. Canada's sources of queen bee imports – value (Canadian dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
United States	6,416,761	6,316,094	7,152,289	7,180,608	7,233,949
Chile	128,051	91,396	217,937	225,279	504,080
Australia	56,248	145,681	265,108	212,140	191,143
New Zealand	108,924	81,787	63,232	884,234	103,034
Ecuador	0	0	7,551	28000	5620
Others	0	0	319,688	32320	5573
Total	6,709,984	6,634,958	8,025,805	8,562,581	8,043,399

Source: Statistics Canada. (CATSNET, March 2020)



3. Consumption

3.1. Honey available¹ for consumption in Canada – kilograms per person

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Honey ²	1.10	0.93	0.90	0.86	0.87

Notes:

1. Food available per person is calculated by dividing the domestic disappearance by the Canadian population as of July 1st of the reference year, at the retail level.

Domestic disappearance represents the total food available for human consumption from the Canadian food supply chain.

Total Supply = Beginning stocks + Production + Imports

Domestic Disappearance = Total supply – Exports – Manufacturing - Waste - Ending stocks

2. Does not adjust for losses, such as waste and/or spoilage in stores, households, private institutions or restaurants or losses during preparation.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0054-01 Food available in Canada



4. World data

4.1. Top 10 producers of honey worldwide – quantity (metric tonnes)

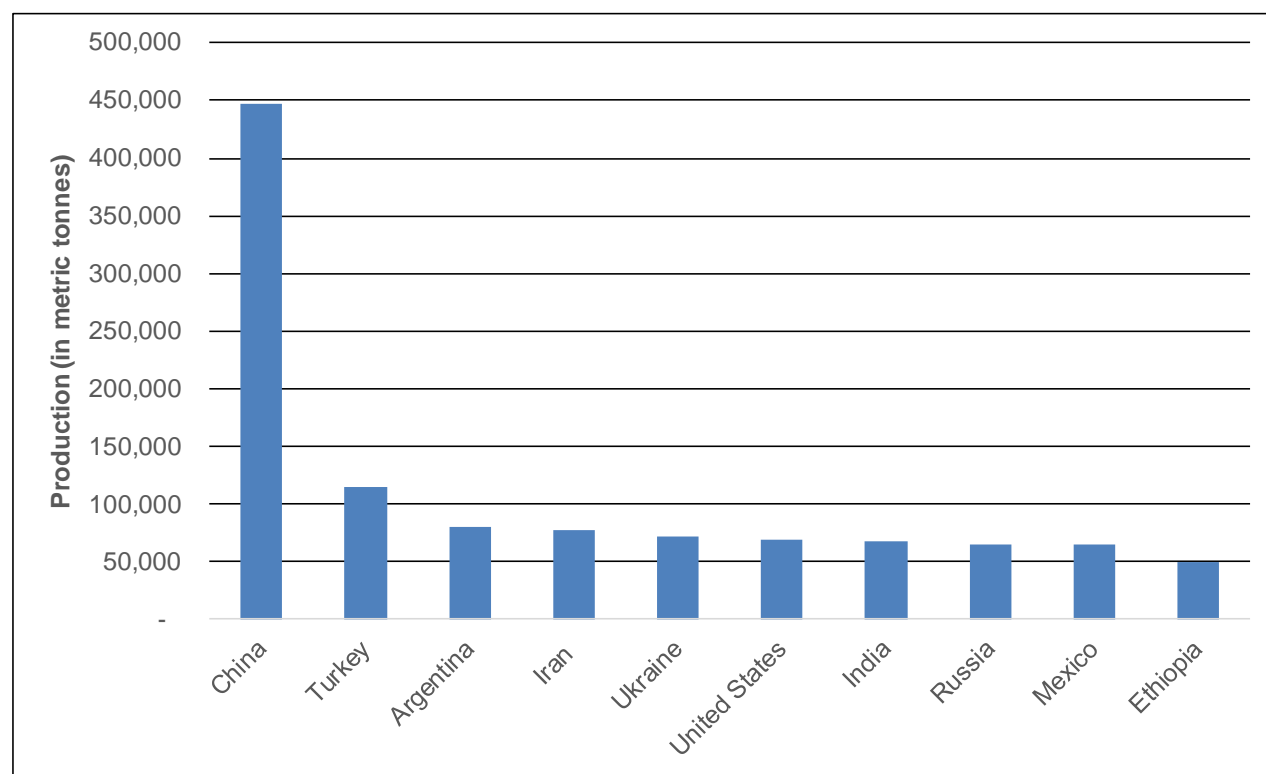
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
China	462,028	473,000	555,000	543,000	446,900
Turkey	103,525	108,128	105,727	114,471	114,113
Argentina	60,000	52,600	68,123	76,379	79,468
Iran	77,800	72,803	67,783	71,187	77,567
Ukraine	66,521	63,615	59,294	66,231	71,279
United States	80,862	71,008	73,429	67,576	69,104
India	61,938	62,472	64,899	66,415	67,442
Russia	74,868	67,736	69,764	65,167	65,006
Mexico	60,624	61,881	55,358	51,066	64,253
Ethiopia	50,000	59,161	47,706	50,000	50,000
Others ¹	665,579	731,623	695,589	707,722	745,741
Total	1,763,745	1,824,027	1,862,672	1,879,214	1,850,873

Note:

1. In 2018, Canada ranked 12th globally with an estimated total honey production of 39,116 tonnes.

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations | © FAO Statistics Division 2020

4.2. Top 10 honey-producing countries, 2018



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations | © FAO Statistics Division 2020



4.3. Top 10 exporters of honey worldwide – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)

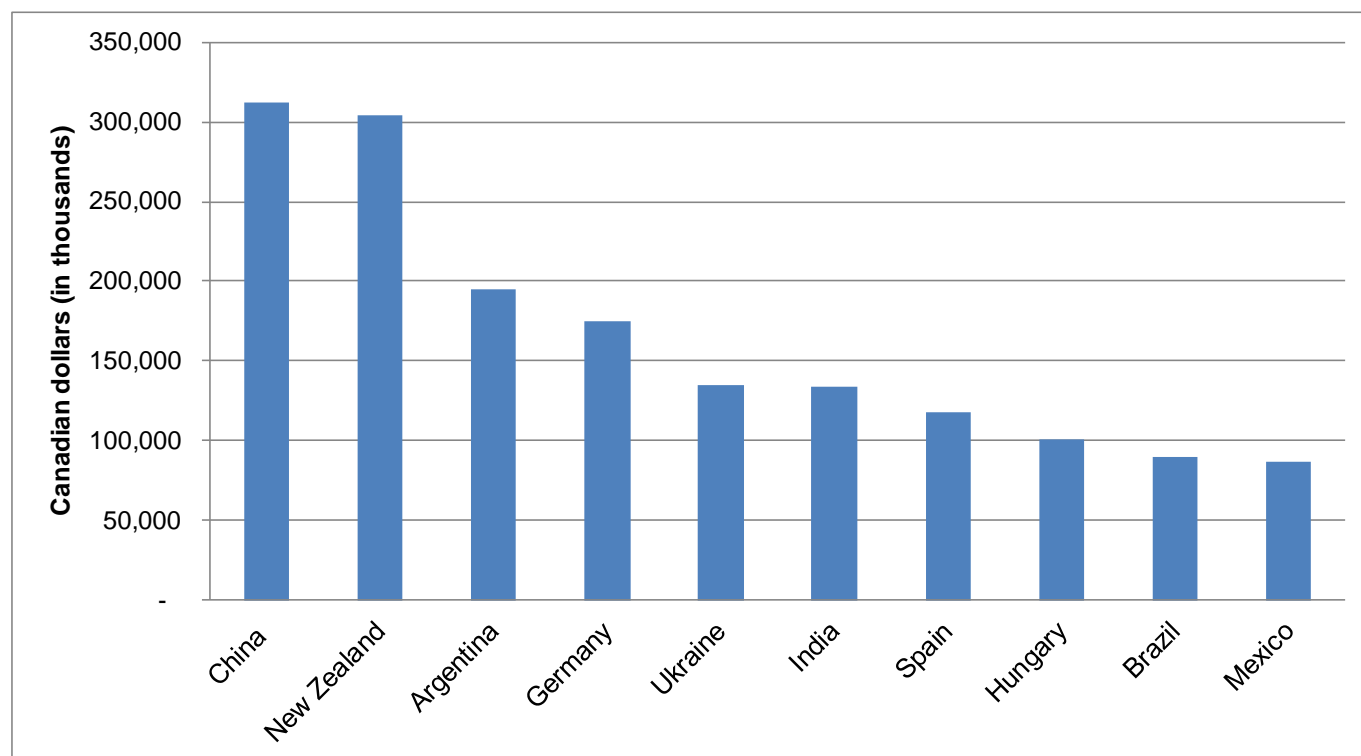
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
China	370,299	367,884	350,287	322,762	311,714
New Zealand	253,729	271,606	348,666	317,420	304,314
Argentina	208,015	223,089	238,189	226,370	194,508
Germany	168,799	181,575	182,095	182,512	174,523
Ukraine	108,802	129,046	172,619	127,788	134,398
India	155,276	93,744	135,573	132,635	134,046
Spain	129,985	144,399	142,967	137,123	117,471
Hungary	96,714	91,497	116,502	111,907	100,611
Brazil	103,934	121,581	158,802	123,790	90,021
Mexico	196,692	123,115	136,753	156,140	87,042
Others ¹	1,003,071	871,918	983,438	952,412	808,922
Total	2,795,317	2,619,454	2,965,893	2,790,858	2,457,570

Note:

1. In 2019, Canada ranked 13th globally with exports totaling \$54,828 thousands.

Source: Global Trade Tracker (March 2020)

4.4. Top 10 honey-exporting countries, 2019



Source: Global Trade Tracker (March 2020)



4.5. Top 10 importers of honey worldwide – value (thousands of Canadian dollars)

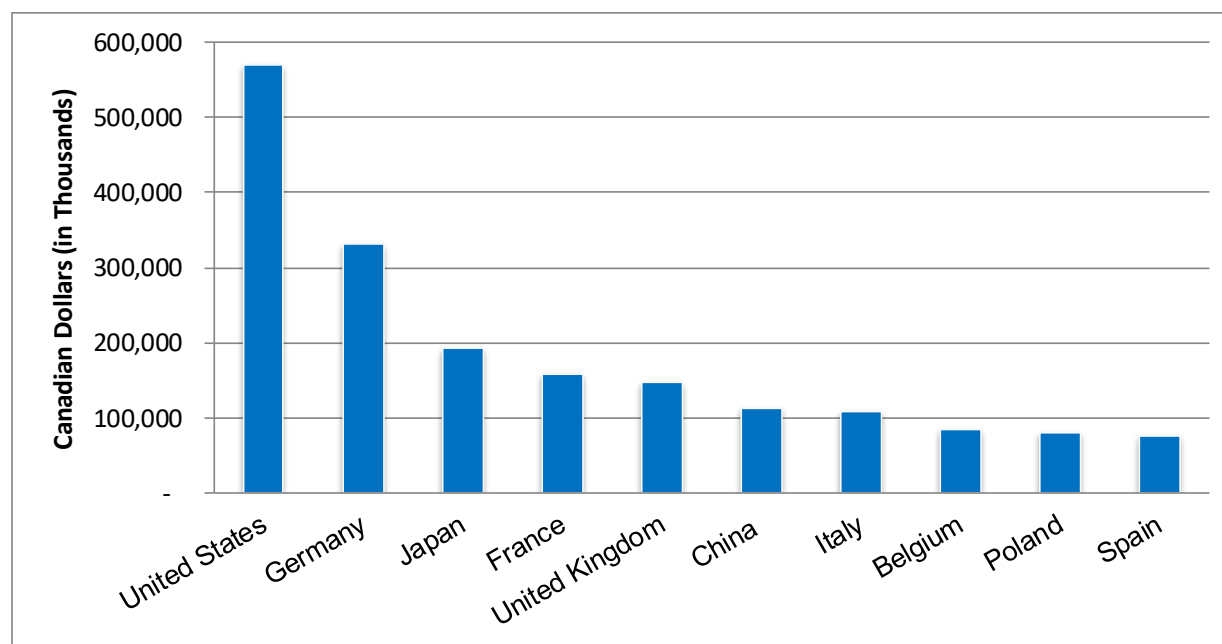
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
United States	770,164	559,415	739,701	645,977	570,863
Germany	425,046	370,790	406,723	396,781	331,100
Japan	150,898	209,152	185,433	188,619	191,603
France	165,264	168,814	169,487	168,204	157,167
United Kingdom	168,236	158,725	169,545	166,461	147,529
China	96,064	96,505	118,605	91,170	112,618
Italy	108,883	96,028	106,654	130,572	107,746
Belgium	115,356	98,383	103,310	94,858	83,113
Poland	62,920	67,407	76,031	81,355	79,938
Spain	93,012	86,542	99,535	87,984	76,217
Others ¹	755,583	728,602	819,685	769,968	623,114
Total	2,911,427	2,640,364	2,994,709	2,821,949	2,481,008

Note:

1. In 2019, Canada ranked 14th globally with imports totaling \$45,394 thousands.

Source: Global Trade Tracker (March 2020)

4.6. Top 10 honey-importing countries, 2019



Source: Global Trade Tracker (March 2020)



6. Key Resources

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Statistics Division
- Global Trade Tracker
- Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0353-01 Production and value of honey
- Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0054-01 Food available in Canada
- Statistics Canada. CATSNET

Import and export data is based on the following Harmonized System Codes (H.S. Codes):

Honey for import: 0409000010; 0409000021; 0409000022; 0409000023; 0409000024;
0409000025; 0409000026; 0409000029; 0409000090

Honey for export: 04090000

Honey Bees for import: 0106410010; 0106410011; 0106410012; 0106900011; 0106900012

Queen Bees for import: 0106410020