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Canada

Honey

Production and Trade Update

2003

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Report Highlights:

This report updates estimates of Canadian honey production and summarizes honey trade developments.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Ottawa [CA1]
[CA]

Summary:

Canadian honey production in 2003 fell nearly 10% from last year's level. The sharp decline was due to fewer colonies, heavy winter losses from disease and weather-reduced yields in eastern and western Canada. The lower production in 2003 is evident in reduced exports of Canadian honey while Canadian imports continue to increase. Argentina captured more than half of the Canadian import market for fresh honey in the first ten months of 2003. Popular brand name honey for sale at retail is frequently a blend of Canadian and Argentine honey.

Production

According to Statistics Canada, Canadian honey production in 2003 reached 33,566 metric tons, 9.5% below the year earlier revised total of 37,072 metric tons. The decline was caused by a reduction in the number of colonies, reflecting a severe winter for temperature and disease and lower yields that were the result of a cool, wet spring in eastern Canada and excessively dry conditions in regions of Western Canada. Quebec's winter disease losses were so severe that colony numbers dropped by more than half. The Quebec government announced a C\$1.9 million program to assist Quebec beekeepers whose colonies suffered from varroa mite.

Varroa Mite Update: According to the Canadian Honey Council (CHC), most provinces are reporting fluvalinate tolerant varroa mites (except Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and Saskatchewan). The mites are spreading north from the U.S. border reflecting the natural movement of bees. Winter mortality was the highest on record to start the 2003 honey season. The CHC claims that the cause of colony death is complex but that it is mainly attributable to the failure of fluvalinate treatment, incomplete or incorrect formic acid treatment and the inability of Canadian beekeepers to obtain supplies of Coumaphos for varroa treatment.

Canadian Honey Production			
	# Beekeepers	# Colonies	Production (metric tons)
Average 1998-2002	9,601	588,434	37,513
2002 Revised	8,958	588,485	37,072
2003 Prelim.	8,340	576,685	33,566
Source: Statistics Canada			

Trade

Imports

Argentina captured more than half of the Canadian import market for fresh honey in the first ten months of 2003. Popular brand name honey for sale at retail is frequently a blend of Canadian and Argentine honey. As shown in the table below, there was a resurgence in imports of Chinese honey in 2003 following the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's recall of imports of Chinese honey last year related to residues of chloramphenicol, a veterinary drug deemed harmful to human health (see CA2140 for background). Imports of U.S. honey fell moderately in the first ten months of 2003 compared to a year ago, but remained above the previous three-year average. For 2004, Canadian honey industry factors dealing with colony numbers and commercial blending practices point to a continued trend to rising imports.

Canadian Honey Imports by Calendar Year
with Jan - Oct 2003 and 2002 comparison

Units: metric tons

HS0409

	2000	2001	2002	Jan-Oct 2002	Jan-Oct 2003	% chng 03/02
-- The World --	2,826	5,210	8,149	6,614	7,591	15%
Argentina	117	1,054	5,720	4,458	4,198	-6%
China	2,018	3,551	1,096	985	1,466	49%
United States	391	292	642	559	500	-10%
Vietnam	-	-	168	168	37	-78%
Australia	41	28	121	88	740	738%
Chile	0	-	83	82	7	-91%
All Others	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Derived from World Trade Atlas

Exports

Total Canadian honey exports in the January to October period of 2003 declined 37% from the comparable period a year ago reflecting a combination of the lower domestic crop, a rapidly appreciating Canadian dollar, and reduced demand for Canadian honey in the United States, Canada's number one market for honey exports.

Canadian Honey Exports by Calendar Year
with Jan - Oct 2003 and 2002 comparison
Units: \$ US millions
HS0409

	2000	2001	2002	Jan-Oct 2002	Jan-Oct 2003	% chng 03/02
-- The World --	15,297	12,691	21,922	17,977	11,393	-37%
United States	12,960	10,564	19,614	16,091	10,259	-36%
Germany	1,352	889	971	906	635	-30%
Japan	301	446	468	288	229	-21%
United Kingdom	264	321	408	326	83	-74%
Bahamas	-	10	6	4	41	861%
Barbados	-	13	18	17	31	87%
All Others	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Derived from World Trade Atlas

Live Bee Import Ban

Canada has imposed an import ban on live bees from the continental United States since 1987 under the Honeybee Importation Prohibition Regulations. Imports from Hawaii are permitted. In August 2000, the ban was extended to December 31, 2004. Bees from the continental US are not permitted into the country because of the presence in the U.S. of treatment-resistant Varroa mites and other pests that are deemed by Canada's animal health authorities to pose a danger to the health of bee colonies in Canada.

Tariffs

Canada applies no import tariffs to honey.

Honey Regulations

Quality standards, packaging and labeling requirements for honey are laid out in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Honey Regulations. The full text of the honey regulations is available at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/reg/rege.shtml>

Container Sizes

Canadian honey regulations stipulate the following metric sizes for domestic or imported honey: any net weight up to 150 grams, 250 grams, 375 grams, 500 grams, 750 grams, 1 kg, 1.5 kg, 2kg, 3kg, and 5 kg. For bulk containers: 7 kg, 15kg, 30 kg, or any larger container where net weight is a multiple of 1 kg.

U.S. honey cannot meet Canada #1 or #2 grade if it contains foreign material that would be retained on a U.S. National Bureau of Standards 60 mesh screen. U.S. exporters marketing liquid honey containing a piece of honeycomb in the jar should note this restriction. Exports to Canada must be accompanied by an import declaration filled out by the shipper and the importer is responsible for inspection fees. Copies of the import declaration are available from the Dairy, Fruit & Vegetable Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, telephone, (613) 225-2342.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: The FAS/Ottawa website is now accessible through the U.S. Embassy homepage. To view the website, log onto www.usembassycanada.gov; click on Embassy Ottawa offices, then Foreign Agricultural Service. The FAS/Ottawa office can be reached via e-mail at: info@usda-canada.com