

# Survey Information

## Cost of Pollination Inquiry

Project Code: 118 – Bee Pollination Cost

Questionnaires: Mailed November 1<sup>st</sup>

Release: *Cost of Pollination* January 11, 2023.

Purpose: To measure costs that crop producers paid for pollination in 2022. The survey focuses on honeybees, both owned and not owned by the operation, but does have a few questions about costs related to other forms of pollination as well.

### **Why is the Cost of Pollination Survey Important?**

There are few sources of data on the costs of pollination at a national level. However, the fees paid for pollination are an important outlay of cash for crop producers and an important source of income for beekeepers.

### **Who will use the information produced from this survey?**

These estimates will be useful in decision making for crop producers, beekeepers, researchers, and policy makers.

### **Why is there a concern over the cost producers pay to have their fields pollinated?**

Pollination fees are an important source of income for beekeepers and a significant expense for certain crops. What is not very well documented is the relationship between factors affecting the beekeeping industry (such as increased honey bee mortality) and the fees charged for crop pollination.

### **Why are we asking crop producers and not beekeepers?**

NASS is only collecting cash fees paid to beekeepers for pollination services. Gifts, rights to land use, or any other non-cash payment should not be recorded.

### Terms and Definitions:

**Apis Mellifera** – scientific name for the Western/European Honey Bee. Non-native to North America, honey bees were brought to the continent by early European settlers. Prolific in honey production and strong ability to over-winter these are the preferred bees for beekeeping and commercial pollination.

**Artificial Pollination** – pollination of flowers by hand using a device in lieu of pollinators.

**Box** – wooden boxed filled with frames that make up a Langstroth hive.

**Colony** – defined by NASS as a hive containing a queen and worker honey bees.

**Fees for Pollination** – the cash paid from a crop producer to a beekeeper. Does not include any non-cash payment.

**Frames** – narrow, wooden structure, typically with a sheet of foundation on the inside, that honey bees build comb on. There are typically 8 or 10 frames in a box. Occasionally used as the unit of measure for pollination contracts (i.e. dollars per frame).

**Hive** – defined by NASS as the physical space in which bees live. Langstroth is the most common type.

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**Non-apis Pollinator** – any pollinator that is not a honey bee (apis). Includes bats, birds, butterflies, other bees, and many others.

**Pollen** – coarse grains produced by plants for reproduction.

**Pollination** – the fertilization of a flower through pollen. Facilitated by pollinators such as bees, butterflies, wind, etc.