
Not so sweet news in honey production

WASHINGTON — U.S. honey production in 2007 totaled 148 million lbs, down 4% from a year earlier and the smallest in records going back to 1954, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Honey production of 148,482,000 lbs last year was down 6,425,000 lbs from 154,907,000 lbs in 2006, the U.S.D.A. said in its Feb. 29 annual Honey report. Production in 2007 was 15% below the prior five-year average of 173.6 million lbs.

Producer stocks of honey on Dec. 15, 2007, totaled 52,484,000 lbs, down 13% from 60,548,000 lbs on the same date a year earlier, the U.S.D.A. said.

A total of 2.44 million colonies produced honey in 2007, up 2% from 2006, the U.S.D.A. said, but yield per colony averaged 60.8 lbs, down 6%.

The average price of all classes of honey in 2007 was 103.2c per lb, down slightly from 103.6c in 2006.

U.S. honey production peaked in 1963 at 299 million lbs, according to U.S.D.A. data. Production has been below 200 million lbs since 2000, when 220 million lbs was produced.

The top honey producing state last year was North Dakota at 31,080,000 lbs. California was second at 13,600,000 lbs, South Dakota third at 13,260,000 lbs and Florida fourth at 11,360,000 lbs. ■

