



Honey Trade



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World Honey Production

Today, honey is one of the last untreated natural foods. At present the annual world honey production is estimated at about 1.4 million tons (FAO, 2005) which is less than 1% of the total sugar production.

www.apiservices.com provides data until 2001, which has been compiled by www.apicultura.com/malka considering the available national production figures. Later date on different countries is provided the Commodity Research Buro, 2005.

Table 1: World production of honey after www.apiservices.com, downloaded in August 2009, data in thousand tons

Continent	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Africa	117	129	131	138	142	140	139	141	144	145
North and Central America	216	223	195	183	174	189	218	201	208	205
South America	87	95	97	105	100	109	109	133	141	131
Asia	328	326	354	365	362	402	401	435	457	465
Europe	182	181	291	319	278	281	291	293	286	288
Oceania	29	30	38	27	35	36	31	29	29	29
total	958	984	1103	1137	1091	1156	1188	1232	1265	1263

Table 2: Production of honey of major producing countries
data after FAOSTAT, in thousand tons

Countries & Years	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
China	254	267	295	298	299	305	303
Argentina	80	83	75	80	110	84	81
Turkey	60	75	70	74	82	80	74
Ukraine	60	51	54	58	71	76	68
USA	84	78	82	83	73	70	67
Mexico	59	59	57	57	50	56	54
Russian Federation	53	49	48	53	52	55	55
India	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
Ethiopia	29	40	38	41	36	44	44
Iran	27	28	28	28	28	36	36
Brazil	20	24	30	32	34	36	35
Canada	32	37	34	34	36	48	31
Spain	32	36	35	37	27	31	31
Tanzania	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
Kenya	25	22	22	22	22	25	25

Table 3: Honey relevant data in selected countries

Country	Prod t/year	Export t/year	Import t/year	Cons. t/year	Cons kg p cap	Bee-keepers	Col. p beek	Col. p. km ²	harvest Kg/col
China	254'000	103'000	-	151'000	0.1	600'000	12	0.7	50
USA	84'000	5'000	79'000	185'000	0.6	125'000	24	0.3	30
Argentina	80'000	88'000	-	2'000	< 0.1	18'000	106	0.7	37
Turkey	60'000	18'000	-	42'000	0.7	150'000	29	5.5	
Mexico	59'000	31'000	-	28'000	0.3	45'000	44	1.0	25
Ukraine	60'000	15'000	-	45'000	0.8	50'000	60	5	15
India	52'000	3'000	-	49'000	< 0.1	150'000	4	0.2	8.5
Spain	32'000	9'500	7'500	30'000	0.8	25'000	72	3.6	18
Germany	35'000	13'000	105'000	127'000	1.5	89'000	10	2.4	40
Canada	32'000	15'000	3'000	20'000	0.7	13'000	38	0.05	66
France	30'000	3'000	8'000	35'000	0.6	84'000	16	2.5	22
Greece	33'000	18'000	3'000	18'000	1.8	23'500	54	9.7	26
Italy	24'000	20	10'000	34'000	0.6	75'000	16	4.0	20
Australia	19'000	11'000	34	8'000	0.4	6'300	107	0.1	39
Brazil	20'000	n i	n i	20'000	0.1	300'000	8	0.3	15
Egypt	20'000	5'000	-	15'000	0.2	20'000	100	0.2	10
Hungary	24'000	15'000	100	8'900	0.9	16'000	38	6.5	40
Iran	27'000	5'000	-	22'000	0.3	56'400	65	2.2	14
Israel	5'400	160	210	5'450	0.9	480	177	4.1	64
Japan	3'000	-	40'000	43'000	0.3	7'235	31	0.6	15
UK	3'000	-	20'000	23'000	0.4	43'900	6	1.0	11
Min.	3'000	0	0	5'450	< 0.1	480	6	0.05	8.5
Max.	256'00	103'000	105'000	185'000	1.8	600'000	177	9.7	66

Production data 2001 from table 2, other data are from other sources indicated in www.apiservices.com, n.i. not indicated; - : zero,

Honey production, export and import

China is the leader in honey production and honey export, followed closely by Argentina, but they both have a very small consumption per capita with about 0.1 kg.

Germany is the biggest honey importing country, importing 3 times more than it is producing. However Germany re-exports a part of the imported honey. Big honey importers are the USA and Japan. Japan is importing the 10 fold of the quantity it produces.

Most West European countries and also the USA have a low degree of honey self sufficiency and have to import most of their honeys. In Europe from the mentioned countries only Greece and Hungary have a high self sufficiency and are net exporters of honey. The important honey export countries like Argentina, China, Mexico and Australia have all a high degree of self sufficiency, but their consumption per capita is very low.

Annual consumption per capita

Developing countries as China, Argentina, India, Brazil and Egypt consume t 0.1 to 0.2 kg per capita. Rich developed countries consume generally higher amounts. However the per capita consumption does not follow the richness of the countries, but there are also cultural influences. In the European Union, the biggest honey consumer is Greece with 1.8 kg, followed by Germany with 1.5 kg, other EU countries like Italy, Spain, France and Hungary are in the intermediate range with 0.6-0.9 kg, while the UK is on the lowest end with 0.4 kg.

Colonies per beekeepers

This number gives some information on how professional the beekeeping is. Low numbers means that the majority of the beekeepers are hobbyists. In the European Union there are remarkable differences: In the UK, Italy and France they numbers vary from 8 to 16, while in Hungary, Greece and Spain they are considerably higher, varying from 38 to 72. The highest numbers are in Israel, meaning that the percentage of the more professional beekeepers is the highest. It is astonishing that China, as the biggest honey exporter has mostly small beekeepers with an average of 12 colonies per beekeepers, while the second honey exporter Argentina has much more big scope beekeepers with 106 colonies per beekeeper. On the lowest end are India, UK and Brazil, on the highest: Israel, Argentina, Australia and Egypt.

Bee density:

- highest is in Greece, 9.7 colonies/km².
- lowest, in Canada, 0.05 colonies/km².
- Countries with the high bee densities (Greece, Portugal, Hungary) have similar per colony yields as countries with the low bee density (Canada, USA, China). This means that there are enough honey sources even in countries with very high bee densities. On average, European countries have a higher bee density than overseas countries.

Honey yield per colony.

The highest honey yields are reported in Israel with an average of 64 kg per colony. Israel has also the highest number of professional beekeepers. Under conditions of a warm climate during the whole year several honey crops are possible. Countries with high honey yields with 40 and more kg per colony are: China, Germany, and Canada. On the lowest end are India, UK and Egyp with 8.5 to 11 kg per colony.



In many countries most of the honey is sold directly from the beekeeper.