

## California Apiary Inspection and Pest Exclusion Activity Report 2025/2026 Import Season

### Background

Millions of colonies of live honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are trucked into California each year. Most honey bees are brought into the state to facilitate crop pollination – most notably almonds. Importations typically begin in September, as the weather cools in northern states and concludes by early March. At the conclusion of the pollination season in California, the bees are typically moved to other states to pollinate other crops or produce honey.

The migratory nature of beekeeping as well as the environments where bee colonies are placed (usually in orchards or pastures) places them at high risk for becoming infested with invasive pests which may hitchhike to and cause infestations in new places. In fact, of the 351 interceptions of actionable invasive species taken from commercial shipments at California Border Protection Stations (BPS) in the 2025/26 apiary import season, 75 interceptions came from bee colonies. This number, representing 21% of all interceptions, makes bee colonies one of the highest risk pathways for introducing invasive pests into California.

Due to the high pest introduction risk, bee colonies are subject to inspection not only prior to entering the state, but also at their destination county by the agricultural commissioners.

### Data Sources and Parameters

This report analyzes inspection and pest find data pertaining to live honey bees moved into California during the 2025/2026 apiary import season (September 1, 2025 through March 15, 2026). The data used for this report was generated at California's Border Protection Stations (BPS) via the Pest Exclusion Information Management (PEIM) system including Warning Notices, Rejection Notices, and Pest Damage Reports issued. When relevant, 2025/2026 statistics are included for comparison purposes.

## Importations

The data below represents all apiary shipments entering through BPS. A shipment is defined as any amount of bee colonies transported by a single truck. Total imported shipments increased by 6.4% in the 2025/26 season as compared to the 2024/25 season.

	2024/25	2025/26	Increase/Decrease
<i>Shipments</i>	4,355	4,619	264
<i>Colonies (Hives)*</i>	1.79M	1.90M	108,504

\*Estimate based on a historical average of 411 hives per shipment

## Importations by Origin

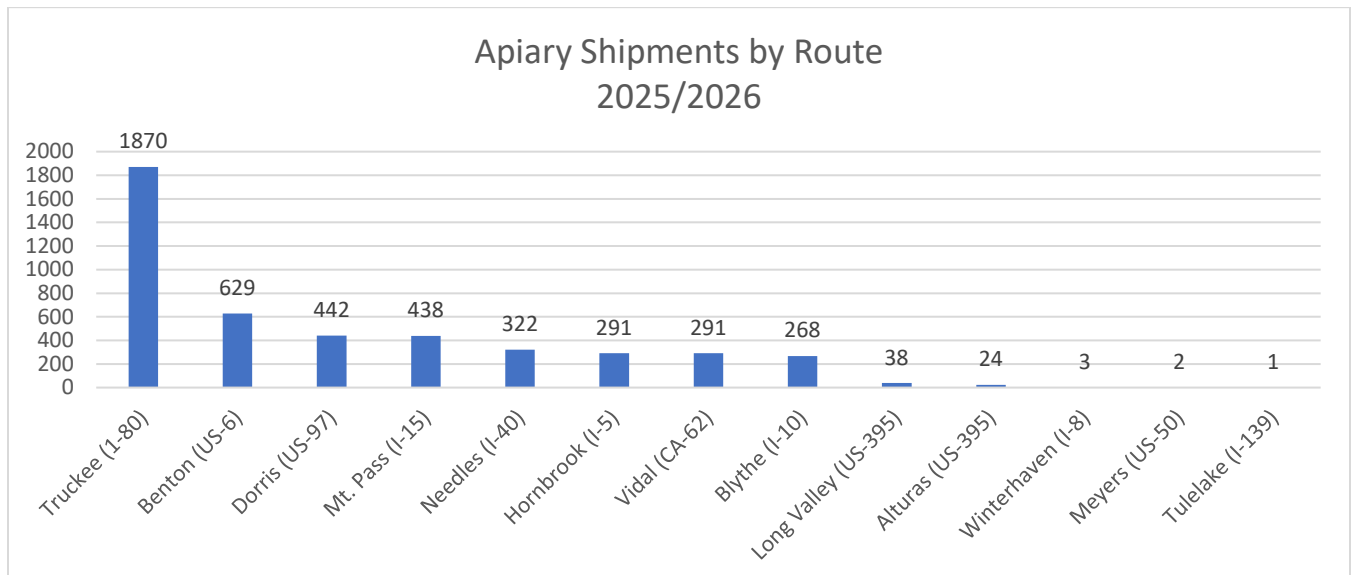
During the 2025/26 season, shipments entered through BPS from 35 states. The table below details the origins of shipments from the 35 states. More than 39 percent of the shipments in the 2025/26 season arrived from either Idaho or North Dakota.

<i>Origin State</i>	<i>2024/25</i>	<i>2025/26</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
ID	1010	1109	99	9.80%
ND	610	717	107	17.54%
OR	375	423	48	12.80%
FL	408	372	-36	-8.82%
WA	354	362	8	2.26%
SD	336	356	20	5.95%
MT	227	218	-9	-3.96%
TX	196	184	-12	-6.12%
GA	80	110	30	37.50%
MN	96	107	11	11.46%
UT	116	104	-12	-10.34%
CO	67	68	1	1.49%
NV	51	68	17	33.33%
WY	55	64	9	16.36%
NE	53	48	-5	-9.43%
LA	46	44	-2	-4.35%
OK	34	34	0	0.00%
WI	43	34	-9	-20.93%
MI	35	33	-2	-5.71%
IA	26	30	4	15.38%
AZ	42	30	-12	-28.57%
MS	12	18	6	50.00%

NC	12	16	4	33.33%
SC	8	14	6	75.00%
AR	12	11	-1	-8.33%
IN	9	10	1	11.11%
NM	3	9	6	200.00%
MO	6	7	1	16.67%
OH	5	5	0	0.00%
MD	3	4	1	33.33%
PA	6	3	-3	-50.00%
CA	0	3	3	na
WV	2	2	0	0.00%
DE	0	1	1	na
NJ	0	1	1	na
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,338</b>	<b>4,619</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>6.48%</b>

### Importations by Route

During the 2025/26 season, shipments of bees entered through 13 of CDFA’s 16 BPS. Consistent with past years, the Truckee BPS, located on Interstate 80, was by far the most utilized route in terms of volume – receiving 1,870 or 40% of all shipments.



**Importations by Destination County**

During the 2025/26 season, 4,619 shipments were released to 42 California counties. Kern County received the most shipments at 818 or 17.71% of all shipments.

<i>Destination County</i>	<i>Shipments</i>	<i>% of Shipments</i>	<i>Destination County</i>	<i>Shipments</i>	<i>% of Shipments</i>
Kern	818	17.71%	San Bernardino	25	0.54%
Madera	740	16.02%	Calaveras	22	0.48%
Stanislaus	638	13.81%	Santa Cruz	17	0.37%
Fresno	607	13.14%	Monterey	15	0.32%
Merced	464	10.05%	Solano	10	0.22%
San Joaquin	167	3.62%	Sutter	10	0.22%
Glenn	165	3.57%	San Benito	9	0.19%
Colusa	145	3.14%	Imperial	6	0.13%
Tulare	142	3.07%	San Luis Obispo	5	0.11%
Butte	113	2.45%	Tuolumne	5	0.11%
Yolo	62	1.34%	Alameda	4	0.09%
Ventura	59	1.28%	Contra Costa	4	0.09%
Tehama	56	1.21%	Mariposa	2	0.04%
Santa Barbara	54	1.17%	Humboldt	1	0.02%
Sacramento	45	0.97%	Inyo	1	0.02%
Kings	40	0.87%	Lake	1	0.02%
Shasta	39	0.84%	Mendocino	1	0.02%
Placer	35	0.76%	Modoc	1	0.02%
Yuba	31	0.67%	Napa	1	0.02%
Amador	29	0.63%	San Diego	1	0.02%
Riverside	28	0.61%	Santa Clara	1	0.02%
			<b>Total</b>	<b>4,619</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Inspections/Pest Finds/Violation of Quarantine

Except for shipments participating in the North Dakota, Montana, Utah and Idaho Apiary Pre-shipment Inspection Program (see page 8), all shipments were inspected for hitchhiking pests at the BPS during the 2025/26 shipping season.

### Summary of Pest Finds

The table below summarizes pest finds at all BPS. The term “pests found” equates to one or more species of viable organisms found during inspection. The term “in Violation of Quarantine” equates to shipments originating from a quarantine area that did not have an accompanying certificate present. During the 2025/26 season, pest finds and violations occurred on 3.01% of incoming shipments. Although the overall shipments have increased, this represents no change in the percentage of pest infested or Violation of Quarantine shipments of 0.00% as compared to the 2024/25 season.

	2024/25	2025/26	Change
<i>Shipments with No Pests Found</i>	4,224	4,619	395
<i>Shipments with Pests Found or in Violation of Quarantine</i>	131	142	11
<i>Total Shipments</i>	4,355	4,718	363
<i>% of shipments with Pests Found</i>	3.01%	3.01%	0.00%

### Disposition of Pest Infested or in Violation of Quarantine Shipments by State

When pest organisms are found infesting a shipment, the pest is tentatively identified via digital imaging by scientists at CDFA’s Plant Pest Diagnostics Lab. If the organism is identified as being state actionable (i.e., a pest being regulated by state quarantine laws), the infestation must be removed or the shipment returned out of state. The pest *Aethina tumida*, or small hive beetle (SHB), is not regulated at the state level but is of concern to certain counties. Shipments infested with SHB may be allowed into certain counties per county policy.

When a shipment is in Violation of Quarantine, the shipment is refused entry into CA. Shipments from Spotted Lanternfly and Spongy Moth Quarantine areas are allowed entry with a certificate issued by a state regulatory agency certifying that shipment was inspected and free of pests.

The table below details the disposition of all pest infested or in Violation of Quarantine shipments for the 2025/26 season. See footnotes for additional details.

Origin State	All Rejections	Allowed Entry					Returned Out of State (6)
		Non-Actionable Pest (1)	SHB Accepting County (2)	Cleaned (3)	Ant-Free Protocol (4)	SLF/SM Certificate (5)	
AR	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
CO	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
FL	33	1	19	8	0	0	8
GA	7	1	2	2	0	3	1
IA	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
ID	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
IN	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
LA	3	1	1	1	0	0	0

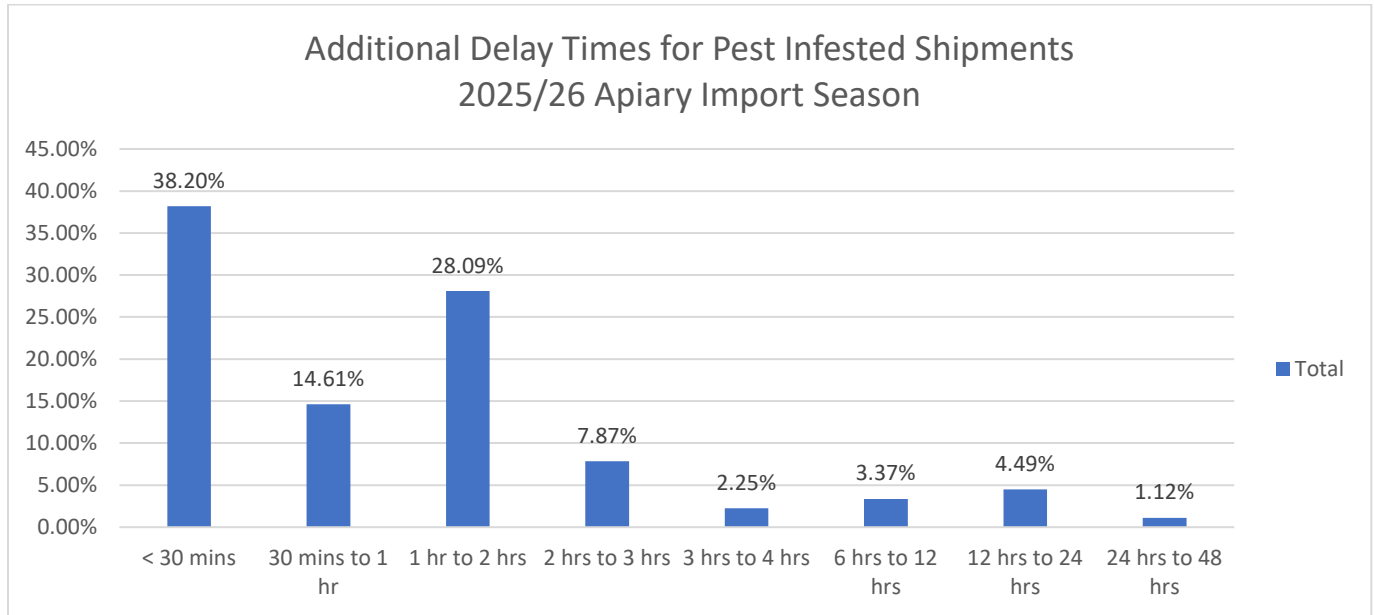
MD	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
MI	2	1	0	0	0	1	1
MN	2	4	0	0	0	0	0
MS	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
MT	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
NC	3	0	1	0	0	2	0
ND	8	6	0	0	0	0	2
NE	4	2	2	0	0	0	1
NV	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
NY	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
OK	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
SC	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
SD	5	4	1	0	0	0	0
TX	8	3	2	2	0	0	2
UT	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	91	32	29	14	0	10	20

- (1) Pest identified as non-actionable. Shipment allowed entry.
- (2) Pest identified as small hive beetle and allowed entry per county policy.
- (3) Pest identified as actionable and mitigated by cleaning. Allowed entry after re-inspection.
- (4) Shipment pre-inspected under Ant-free Certification Program (see page 6 and 7), pest identified as actionable worker ants but within tolerance. Shipment allowed entry.
- (5) Spotted Lanternfly or Spongy Moth certificate received. Shipment allowed entry.
- (6) Pest identified as actionable and pest could not be mitigated by cleaning or driver declined to attempt to mitigate by cleaning. Shipment refused entry and returned out of state.

**Delay of Pest-Infested Shipments**

Shipments infested with hitchhiking pests are subject to additional delays while pests are identified and, if necessary, cleaning of the shipment is attempted. The graph below represents approximate delay times for pest infested shipments during the 2025/26 season based on time in and time out data collected on Rejection Notices.

This graph does not account for normal delays for all shipments due to inspection and given traffic flow at time of entry. On average, pest infested shipments were delayed one hour and twenty-five minutes longer than shipments with no pest finds. Most pest-infested shipments (52.81%) had an additional delay of under one hour.



**Actionable Pests**

A total of 75 actionable pests were intercepted on incoming shipments of bee colonies in the 2025/26 season. Because often a single shipment may be infested with more than one actionable pest, it is difficult to make a direct correlation between the number of actionable pests detected and the number of shipments inspected with currently available data. Although actionable pest finds were reduced in the 2025/26 season, the information demonstrates the continued high pest risk, both in terms of pest numbers and pest variety, presented by incoming apiary shipments.

Pest	2024/25 Occurrences	2025/26 Occurrences	Decrease or increase
Small Hive Beetle	45	30	-15
Carpenter Ants	35	24	-11
Red Imported Fire Ant	16	10	-6
Other Ants	16	6	-10
Bagworm Moths	9	2	-7
Other Pests	8	0	-8
Weeds	2	1	-1
Termites	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>-56</b>

## Pre-Entry Certification

### Apiary Pre-Shipment Inspection Program

The Apiary Pre-Shipment Inspection Program for apiary shipments began as a pilot project in North Dakota for the 2018/19 season. Under this voluntary program, bee colonies are inspected for invasive pests at origin in lieu of inspecting them at the California border. The goal of the program is to minimize delays and the risk of rejection for bee shipments entering from states that present a low pest risk, while improving safety conditions, reducing workload, and easing traffic congestion at the BPS.

As a safeguard, shipments entering under this program continue to be subject to inspection by county agricultural commissioners at destination.

After a successful partnership with North Dakota in 2018/19, the program was expanded to include Idaho in 2019/20, Montana in 2022/23 and Utah in 2023/24. As indicated by the table below, 1,182 shipments were inspected at origin in the 2025/26 season. This represents a 22.87% increase from 962 shipments in the 2024/25 season. Although there is a trend of increased participation, beekeepers still feel this program is beneficial.

State	Total Apiary Shipments	Shipments Inspected at Origin	Percent of shipments Inspected at Origin
<b>2025/2026 Season</b>			
Idaho	1,109	928	83.68%
North Dakota	717	162	22.59%
Montana	218	47	21.56%
Utah	104	45	43.27%
<b>2024/2025 Season</b>			
Idaho	1,010	741	73.37%
North Dakota	610	135	22.13%
Montana	227	52	22.91%
Utah	116	34	29.31%

**Ant-Free Certification Program**

There are currently 18 states eligible to participate in the Ant-free Certification Program: Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

This program differs from the Apiary Pre-Shipment Inspection Program outlined above in that shipments entering under this program are still inspected upon entry at the BPS. However, shipments certified as being “ant-free” have mitigations in place at origin to prevent introduction of ant colonies and are given the advantage of having a tolerance of up to 5 worker ants being found during BPS inspection without rejection.

In the 2025/26 shipping season, 925 shipments arrived from eligible states. Of these, 341 (36.86%) were certified by 12 of the 18 participating eligible states (no certificates were received from 6 eligible states). Of the shipments from participating states, pests were found on 6.85% of the non-certified shipments vs pest finds on 2.35% of the certified shipments. The table below details these statistics.

**Summary of Shipments Entering under Ant-Free Certification  
2024/2025 Season**

State	Non-Certified Shipments				Certified Shipments			
	No Pests Found	Pests Found	Total Shipments	% of Pest Finds	No Pests Found	Pests Found	Total Shipments	% of Pest Finds
Arkansas	4	2	6	33.33%	7	0	7	0.00%
Florida	221	29	250	11.60%	151	4	155	2.58%
Georgia	32	3	35	8.57%	81	1	82	1.22%
Kansas	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
Louisiana	6	0	6	0.00%	38	3	41	7.32%
Maryland	4	0	4	0.00%	1	0	1	0.00%
Michigan	28	1	29	3.45%	6	0	6	0.00%
Mississippi	13	0	13	0.00%	6	0	6	0.00%
Nevada	68	1	69	1.45%	0	0	0	0.00%
N Carolina	4	1	5	20.00%	14	0	14	0.00%
Oklahoma	34	2	36	5.56%	0	0	0	0.00%
Pennsylvania	0	0	0	0.00%	3	0	3	0.00%
S Carolina	4	0	4	0.00%	12	0	12	0.00%
Tennessee	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
Utah	104	1	105	0.95%	0	0	0	0.00%
Vermont	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
Wisconsin	22	0	22	0.00%	12	0	12	0.00%
W Virginia	0	0	0	0.00%	2	0	2	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>6.85%</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>2.35%</b>