



# Public Meeting

Hobbyist Beekeeper Survey

Results Meeting

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April 25, 2024

## CDFA – Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services



### **Jennifer Berger**

Senior Environmental Scientist, Specialist  
Apiary Protection Program

### **Canh Nguyen**

Environmental Program Manager I  
Integrated Pest Control Branch

### **Marcie Skelton**

Agricultural Commissioner, Glenn County

### **Ariel Ambruster**

Facilitator  
California State University, Sacramento

# Introductions

# Agenda



Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review



Clarifying Registration and Fee System



Results of Hobbyist Beekeeper Surveys



Update on CDFA Proposed Revised Approach to Beekeeper Registration & Fees



Time for Q&A



Closing and Next Steps

# Food & Agricultural Code

## *The Law*

The California Food and Agricultural Code  
Section 29044(a):

“...person in possession of any apiary, shall pay...an annual registration fee not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) to the secretary on January 1 of each year...”



# Food & Agricultural Code

## *The Exemption*

The California Food and Agricultural Code Section 29044(a) also includes an exemption clause:

“.....The **board of supervisors of any county**, with the approval of the secretary, may **waive** the registration fee for any beekeeper, apiary owner, apiary operator, or person, who is a hobbyist not in the business of beekeeping and who possesses nine or fewer colonies.”

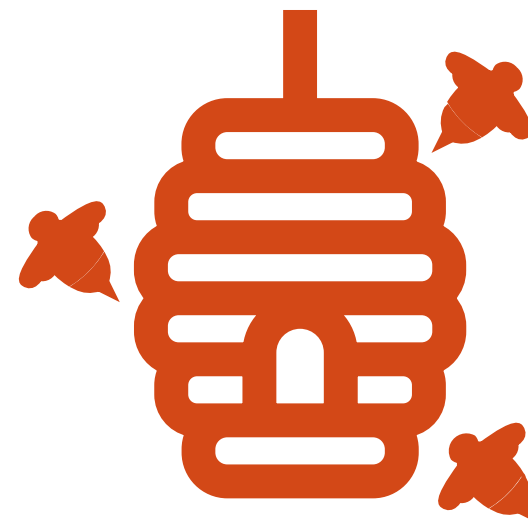
# Registration Fee Schedule

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This section FAC 29044 establishes the following annual registration fee schedule for any person in possession of an apiary. Each beekeeper **shall** pay an annual registration fee.

\*Fee amount cannot be zero, however beekeepers with nine colonies or less may request a fee waiver.

**Note: Fees for beekeepers are delayed until January 1, 2025, but registration with the county agricultural commissioner is still required.**





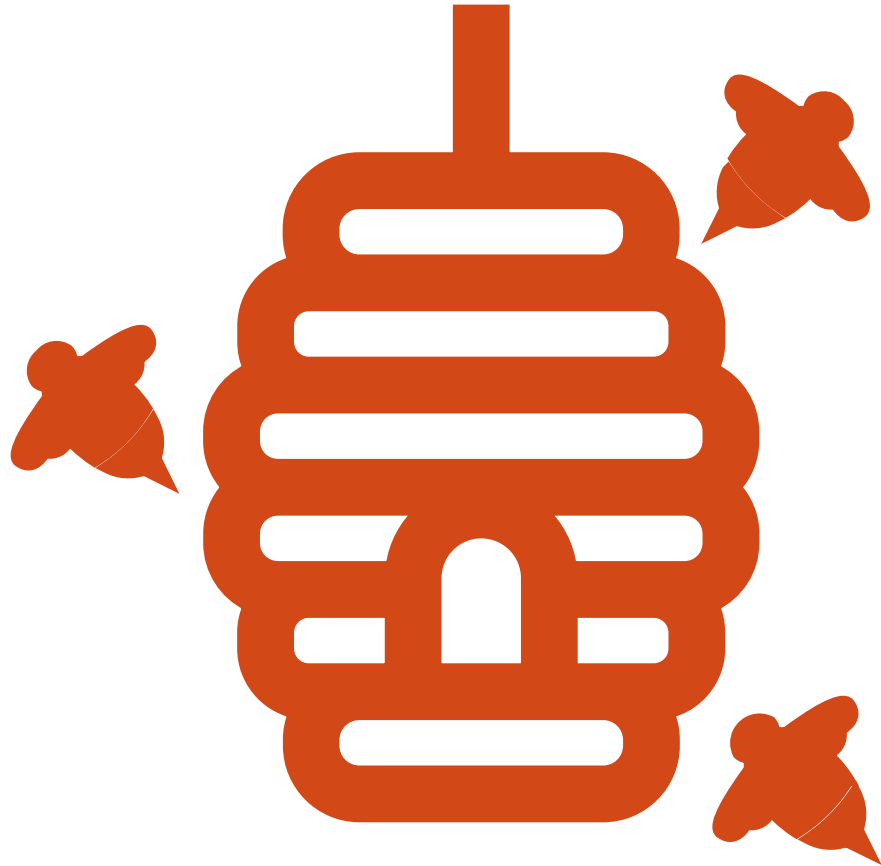
# CDFA Engagement Process

## **CDFA Engagement**

- January 18, 2024, Listening Session
- Survey – Posted January 16, 2024. Survey closed February 28, 2024
- Today's Survey Results Meeting

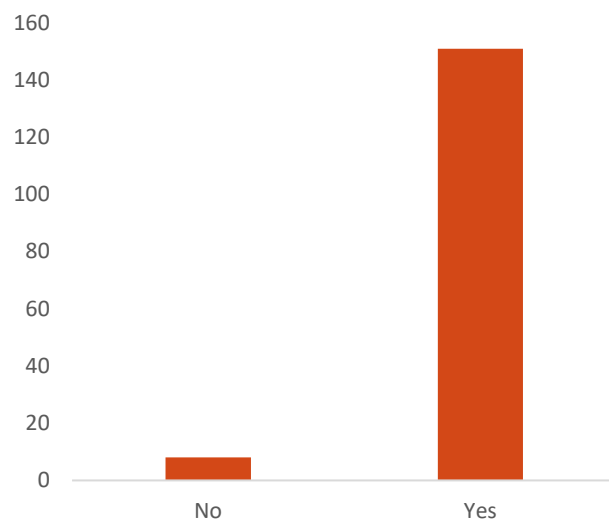
# Survey Results...

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## Are you a hobbyist beekeeper?



159 survey takers.

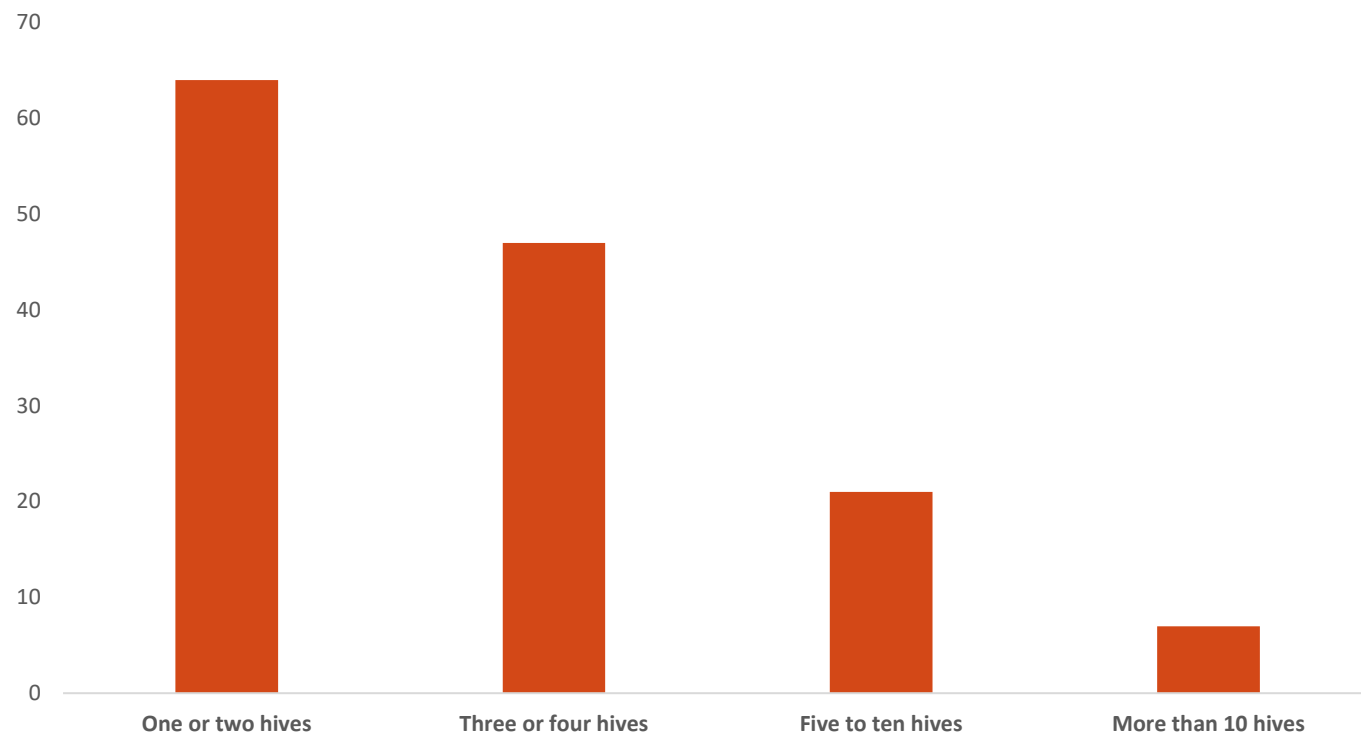
8 responded as “No”, not a hobbyist

151 responded as “Yes”, a hobbyist

Of the respondents that entered “No”, two answered that they were a commercial beekeeper.

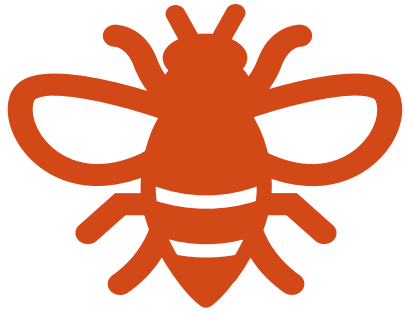


## How many hives do you have?

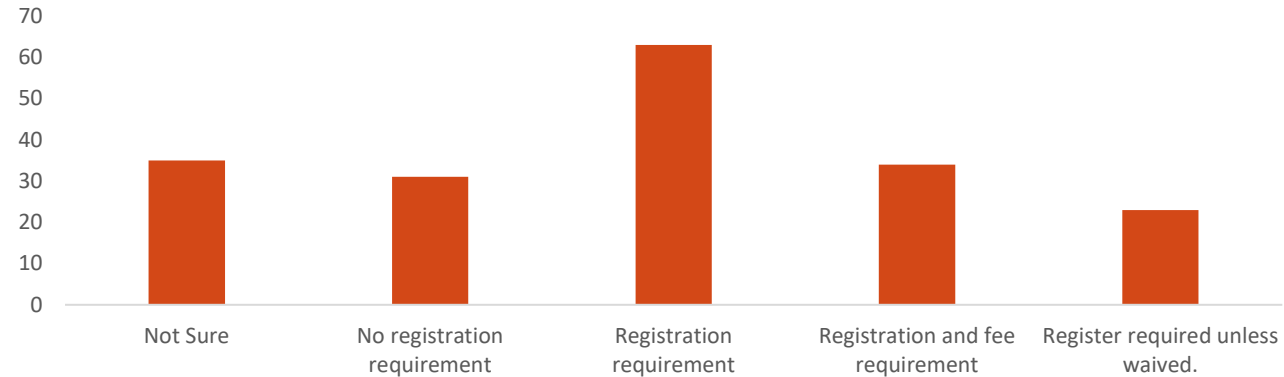


How many hives do you have?	
One or two hives	40%
Three or four hives	30%
Five to ten hives	13%
More than 10 hives	4%

\*One hobbyist reported 60 hives and another 120 hives!

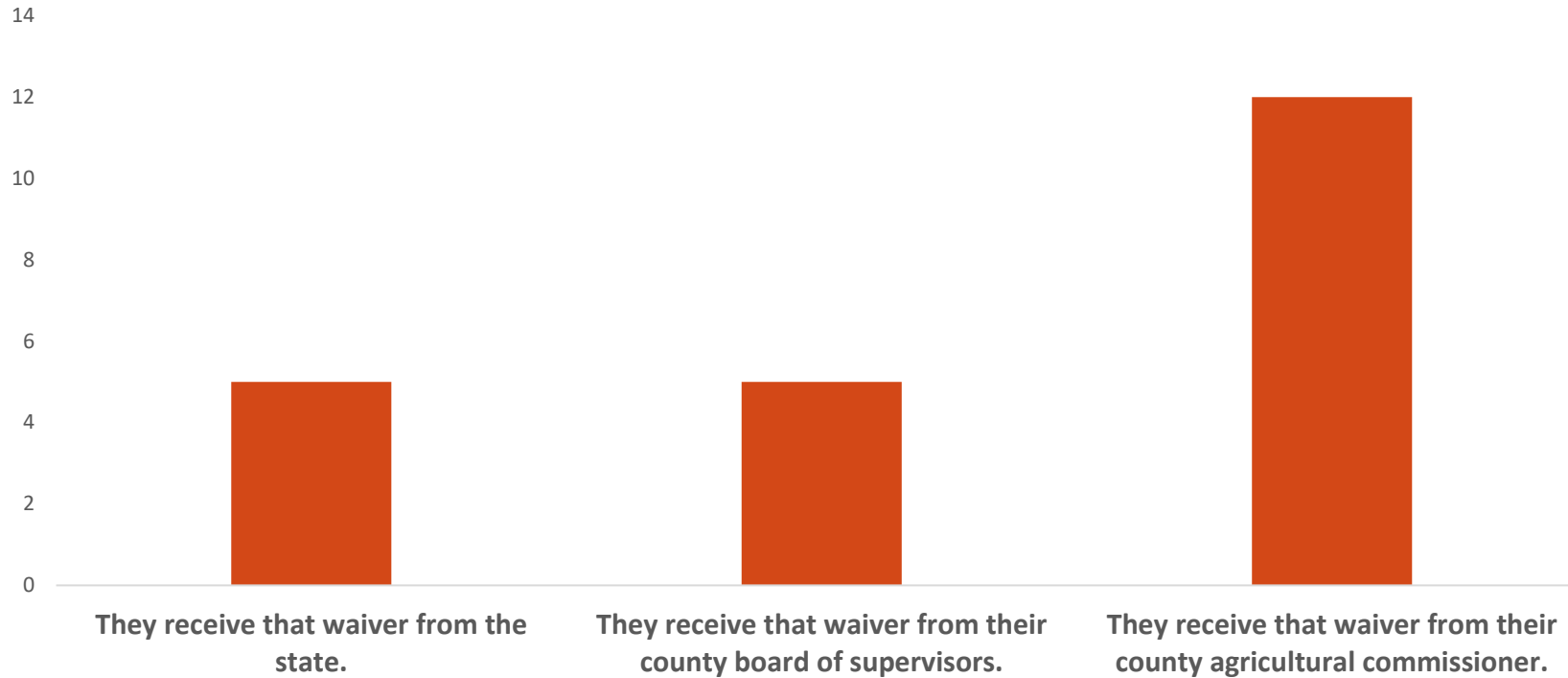


## Which of the following reflects your understanding of current law regarding state registration requirements for hobbyist beekeepers



The state considers a "hobbyist" beekeeper to be someone not in the business of beekeeping with 9 or fewer colonies. Which of the following reflects your understanding of current law regarding state registration requirements for hobbyist beekeepers	
I don't know what current laws are regarding state registration requirements for hobbyist beekeepers.	22%
There is no requirement for hobbyist beekeepers to register with the state.	20%
There is a requirement that hobbyist beekeepers register with the state.	40%
There is a requirement that hobbyist beekeepers register with the state and pay a fee.	21%
There is a requirement that hobbyist beekeepers register with the state and pay a fee, unless they seek and receive a fee waiver.	15%

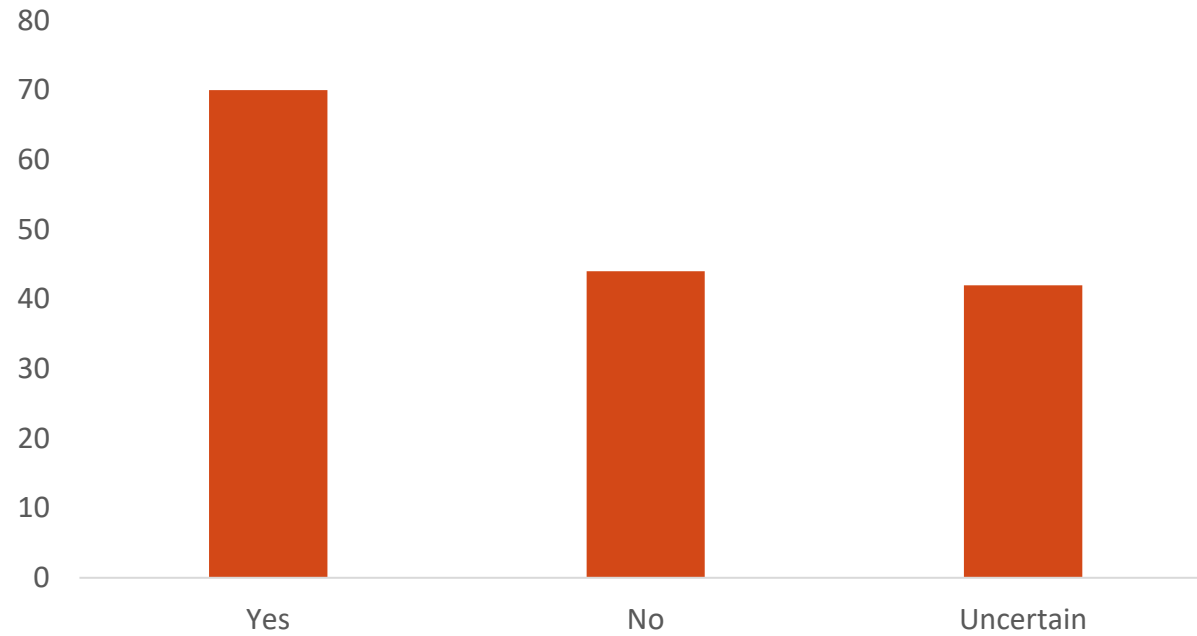
## Where does a waiver come from?



Where does a waiver come from?	
They receive that waiver from the state.	3%
They receive that waiver from their county board of supervisors.	3%
They receive that waiver from their county agricultural commissioner.	8%

\*Please see your local County Agricultural Commissioner's Office to see if a waiver is currently in place.

## Do you plan to register your bees?



After being informed of the information in Question 3, will you register with the state?	
Yes	44%
No	28%
Uncertain	26%

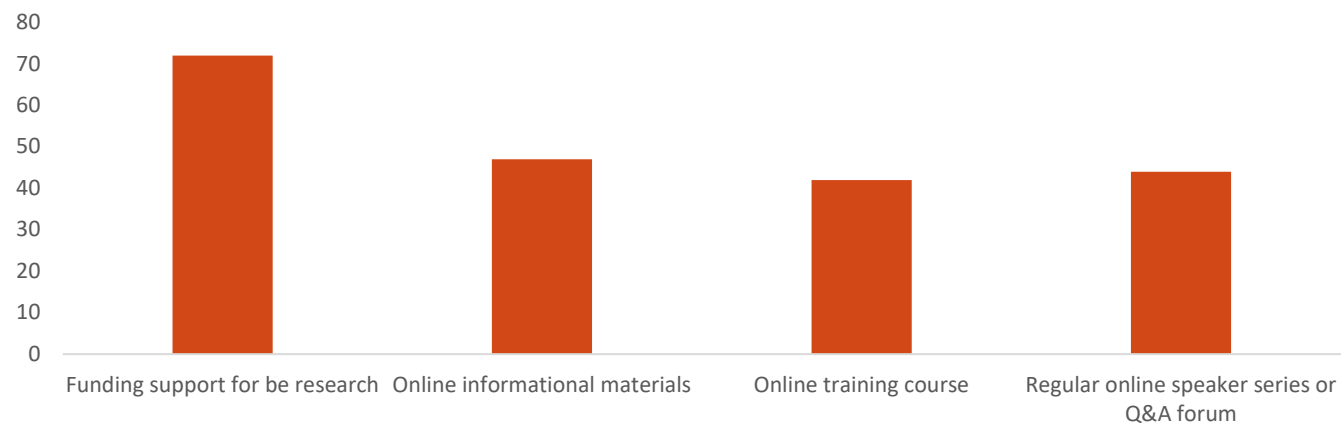


## Have you registered with the state in the past?



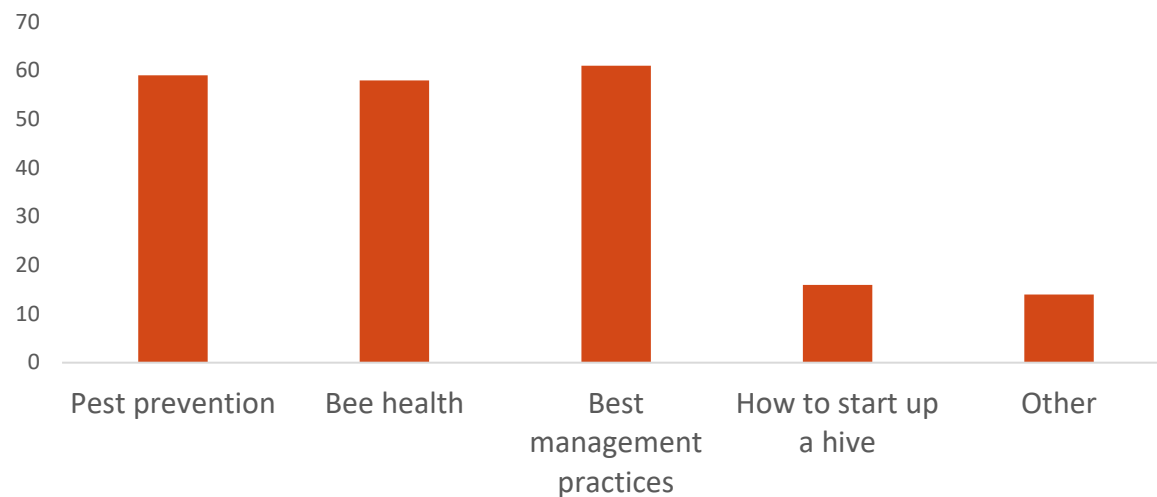
Have you registered with the state in the past?	
No	50%
Yes, with fee waiver	22%
Yes, without fee waiver	21%
Uncertain	6%

## Services you would like to see the state provide



Services	
Funding support for be research	45%
Online informational materials	29%
Online training course	26%
Regular online speaker series or Q&A forum	28%

## Type of information you would like provided



Type of information you would like provided	
Pest prevention	37%
Bee health	36%
Best management practices	38%
How to start up a hive	10%
Other	9%





# Additional services you would be interested in

- Bee diagnostics/testing upon request or fee based. Accessible and affordable.
- Funding for non-profits that promote education on honeybees.
- Hive testing when requested; similar to the diagnostic labs across CA.
- Information on procedures required to vacate bees from properties.
- Pesticide use reduction in cities and counties and well as restriction for residential use.
- Real-time spray notification alerts.



# Additional services you would be interested in (Continued)



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- Regulating commercial (migratory) out-of-state beekeepers and where they "park" their flatbeds laden with hundreds of hives.
  - Seasonal checklist for both Northern and Southern California and areas in between.
  - Would like to see diagnostic labs established where beekeeper can bring their bees for tests and diagnostics; like Avian Science labs operate under CDFA.
  - Varroa research information.

# County Agricultural Commissioner Update

- 58 counties, represented by 55 Agricultural Commissioners across the state
- Each agricultural commissioner is charged with the protection of California agriculture, the protection of the environment as well as protection of the public's health and safety.
- These goals are accomplished through the management of programs designed to achieve our mission through a combination of public outreach, industry education and enforcement actions
- Sealers of Weights & Measures – Protecting Agriculture, the Environment, Consumers and Business.

- Pest Exclusion
  - Pest Detection
  - Pest Management
  - Seed Certification
  - Nursery Inspection
  - Fruits, Nuts, & Veg. Standardization
  - Egg Inspection
  - **Apiary Inspection**
  - Crop Statistics
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- Service Agents
  - Devices
  - Quantity Control
  - Weighmaster
  - Petroleum Products



California Agricultural Commissioners  
and Sealers Association

CACASA

# County Agricultural Commissioner Update

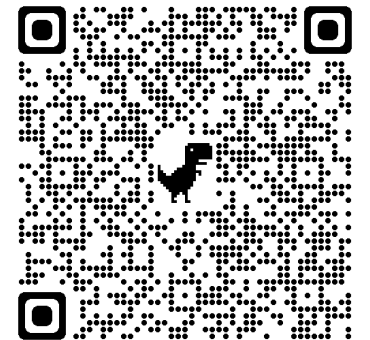
## Apiary Inspection Program

- A program that emphasizes the registration and site location of honeybee colonies in the county.
- At the request of beekeepers or growers, the CAC inspects colonies for strength and health to ensure effective pollination.
- Enforcement of local county ordinances and the Food and Agriculture Code, Division 13, [Bee Management & Honey Production](#)



California Agricultural Commissioners  
and Sealers Association

CACASA



# Ag Commissioner Survey – Hobbyist Apiary Reg.

- *Hobbyist Defined as: Food & Ag Code 29044, possess 9 or fewer colonies*
- 45 counties responded to survey
- 13 of these counties HAVE NOT historically waived the \$10 fee and do not plan on changing their policies with the adoption of the new regulation
- 26 counties that responded HAVE historically waived the fee, plan to continue to waive the fee.
- 6 are considering no longer waiving the fee and change their policies with the adoption of the new regulation.
- Counties offering fee waivers will do so for all qualifying beekeepers, as determined by their Board of Supervisor approved Fee Schedule.



California Agricultural Commissioners  
and Sealers Association

CACASA

# County Ag Commissioner Survey – Summary

✓ County Ag Commissioners are awaiting regulatory text announcement and final approval to determine the best course of action for their county.

✓ Contact your County Ag Commissioner’s office for more information

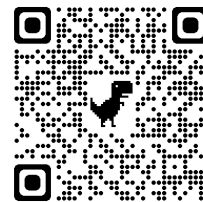
<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/>



✓ All beekeepers (regardless of size) need to register

✓ Registrations and any applicable payments will be online in 2025 at

<https://beewherecalifornia.com/>



California Agricultural Commissioners  
and Sealers Association

CACASA

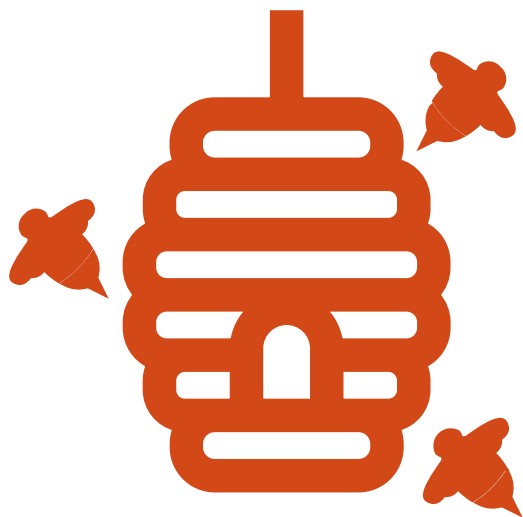


## NEXT STEPS

- Draft regulation posted on Office of Administrative Law (OAL) website for public comment.  
[https://oal.ca.gov/california\\_regulatory\\_notice\\_online/](https://oal.ca.gov/california_regulatory_notice_online/)
- 45 days Public Comment Period
- After comments are considered, final regulation is published and becomes effective.

# FAQ'S

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- Do I have to request the waiver from the board of supervisors in my county?
- If I have more than 9 colonies, can I still be considered a hobbyist?
- Do I have to register if I only have one colony of bees?
- If I sell at the Certified Farmers' Markets, do I need to register?



# Q & A

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Thank You

We appreciate your valuable input

**CDFA – Apiary Protection Program**

[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/pollinators/  
ApiaryProtection.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/pollinators/ApiaryProtection.html)

