

2024-2025 Central Coast Winter Loss Report

by Dewey M. Caron, May 2025

Central Coast Beekeepers were encouraged to complete a web-based survey document in a continuing effort to define overwintering losses/successes of backyard beekeepers in Oregon and Washington. This was the 16th year of such survey activity. I received 251 responses from OR backyarders, keeping anywhere from 1 to 49 colonies. Central Coast members sent in 9 surveys, 2 more compared to last year, 4 in 2023 and single individual in 2022. **Loss rate was 44% of overwintering colonies**, 5 percentage points higher than last year, 18 percentage points higher than statewide. The 9 individuals managed a total of 41 fall colonies, range of 2 to 20 colonies.

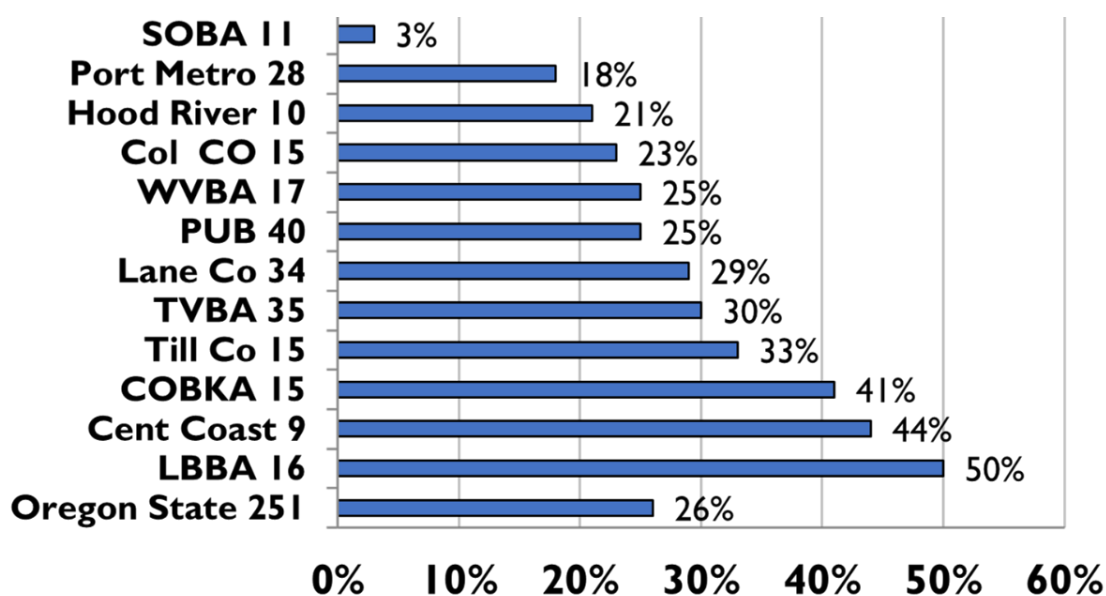


Figure 1

The loss level of 44% is the highest in 4 years of respondent records for Central Coast beekeepers. The 9 individuals returning a survey is, additionally, the highest number in these 4 years. Last year 7 respondents had a 39% loss level, the 4 individuals returning a survey in the 22-23 survey year had a 22% loss level. One individual represented Central Coast respondents in 21-22 survey year – that individual from Florence lost their single colony – 100% loss – was that you?

Of the seven 8-frame overwintered hives 3 survived (43% loss level) and for the 42 10-frame Langstroth colonies overwintered, 15 did not survive (36% survival). This relationship of 8- and 10-frame losses is the reverse of statewide – 8-frame losses were 21% and 10-frame 28% statewide. We see the same relationship year after year. The single nuc survived winter along the coast as did the single Slovenian hive.

Not everyone had loss – 2 individuals did not lose any colonies overwinter (4 total colonies) but

unfortunately an equal number, 2 individuals, lost all their colonies (6 colonies total). Two individuals lost one colony, 3 individuals lost 2 colonies and one each lost 4 and 6 colonies (6 was the greatest loss). Six individuals (67%) had a mentor when they were learning beekeeping. In terms of years' experience, unlike statewide, increased years of beekeeping did not improve overwintered success for Central Coast members. The 2 individuals with 2 or 3 years experiences lost 50% of their colonies (2 of 4 lost), as did those with 4- 7 years' experience (4 of 8 colonies lost); the 4 individuals who indicated 12 to 20 years keeping bees, the loss was only slightly better at 45% (15 of 31 colonies lost).