

## Beemageddon? Honeybee numbers at 20 year high

You've heard the news about honeybees. "[Beepocalypse](#)," they've called it. [Beemageddon](#). America's honeybees are dying, putting honey production and [\\$15 billion worth of pollinated food crops](#) in jeopardy.

The trouble all began around 2006, when beekeepers began noticing mysterious die-offs. It was soon christened "[colony collapse disorder](#)," and has been responsible for the loss of [20 to 40 percent of managed honeybee colonies](#) each winter.

But the number of honeybee colonies has actually *risen* since CCD was first documented in 2006, from 2.4 million to 2.7 million in 2014, according to the USDA. The 2014 numbers show that the number commercial honey-producing bee colonies managed by human beekeepers is now the highest it's been in 20 years.

So if CCD is wiping out close to a third of all honeybee colonies a year, how are their numbers rising? One word: Beekeepers.

Beekeepers have devised two main ways to replenish stock. The first involves [splitting one healthy colony into two separate colonies](#). The other involves buying a bunch of bees to replace the ones you lost. When CCD came along, it roughly doubled the usual annual rate of bee die-offs. But this doesn't mean that bees are going extinct, just that beekeepers need to work a little harder to keep production up.

The price of that extra work will get passed on to the consumer. The retail price of honey has roughly doubled since 2006. And Kim Kaplan, a researcher with the USDA, points out the amount beekeepers charge to cart their bees around to farms and pollinate fruit and nut trees has approximately doubled over the same period.

But rising prices for fruit and nuts hardly constitute the "beepocalypse" that we've all been worried about.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post:** Call off the bee-pocalypse: U.S. honeybee colonies hit a 20-year high