



Apiary *program*

Winter Report
2015/2016

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) has conducted its third survey for overwintering losses of honey bee colonies. The survey was open to any beekeeper in the State of Utah between March and May of 2016; data was collected for the 2015/2016 winter. **The results of this survey are not scientific.** UDAF would like to thank the hundreds of participants that took the time to complete this survey.

Methodology

The survey was open from the beginning of March to the first of May in 2016. The questionnaire was created on SurveyMonkey.com and invitations to participate were sent to all registered beekeepers that had provided email contact information to UDAF. Six questions were asked in this survey:

- 1) **City or township where beeyard is located?**
- 2) **How many colonies (excluding nucs and splits) were in your beeyard(s) going into the 2015/2016 winter?**
- 3) **How many colonies (excluding nucs and splits) died during the 2015/2016 winter?**
- 4) **Were your 2015/2016 winter losses higher, lower or the same as the previous winter?**
- 5) **Are you hives migratory (transported for pollination events) or stationary?**
- 6) **How many total pounds of extractable honey did your hives in this yard produce during the season?**

Results

505 different beeyards were reported for the survey. Beekeepers in the state had an average of 3.1 colonies going into the 2015/2016 winter; they lost an average of 1.7 during this period (see page 3). A plurality of beekeepers that had bees for more than one year, reported that these losses were higher than in the previous winter (31.2%). Approximately 9.9% of respondents claimed that their losses were lower than in the previous winter. Nearly 25.1% of

beekeepers surveyed reported that their losses were the same as the previous winter. 33.6% of beekeepers said that they did not have bees in the previous winter or they did not have bees in the previous winter in the location reported (see page 4). The vast majority of participants were stationary beekeepers (98%) (see page 5).

The city with the top number of responses was Salt Lake City (53). Cities where beekeepers reported the best honey production included Pleasant View, Ogden and Syracuse; beekeepers in these cities averaged over 35 lbs per hive (see page 8). Utah beekeepers reported an average of 78.0 pounds of honey production, with an average of 21.0 lbs per hive. Beekeepers in Orem, Bountiful and Holladay stated the best overwintering success. Overwintering losses in Kaysville, South Jordan and Riverton are reported to be high (see Figure 1) .

Discussion

The results of the survey suggest that Utah beekeepers had less overwintering success in the 2015/2016 winter when compared to the previous season. The average yield of 21.0 lbs per hive reported is well below the national commercial average of 56.6 lbs per hive (NASS 2013).

Figure 1: Best and Worst Overwintering by City

If 5 or more beekeepers in a given city reported that they had bees in the previous winter, it was calculated whether their overwintering losses were overall better or worse than in the previous year.

Best

Orem

12 respondents
33% lower losses

Bountiful

9 respondents
22% lower losses

Holladay

9 respondents
22% lower losses

Worst

Kaysville

6 respondents
84% higher losses

South Jordan

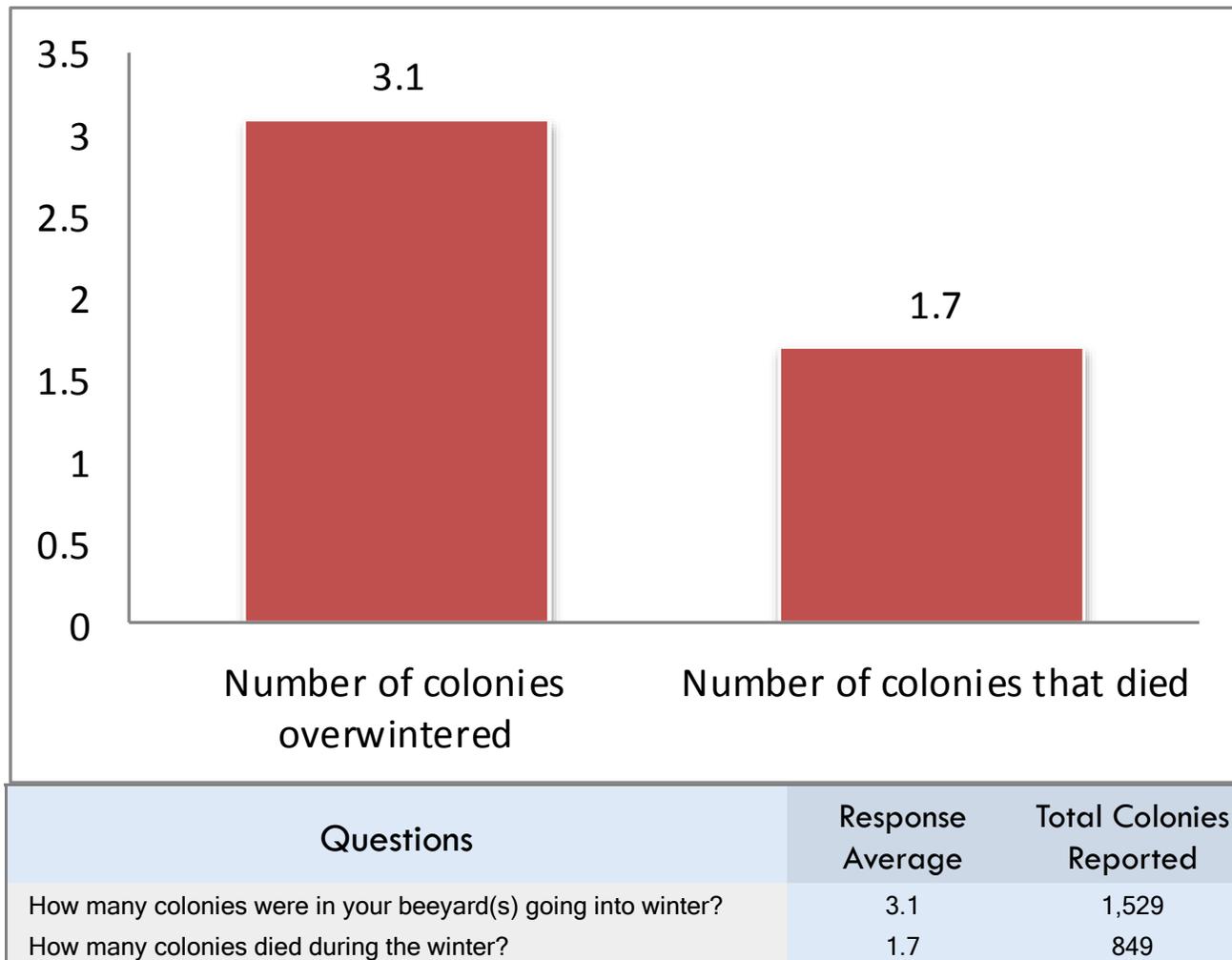
14 respondents
71% higher losses

Riverton

7 respondents
57% higher losses

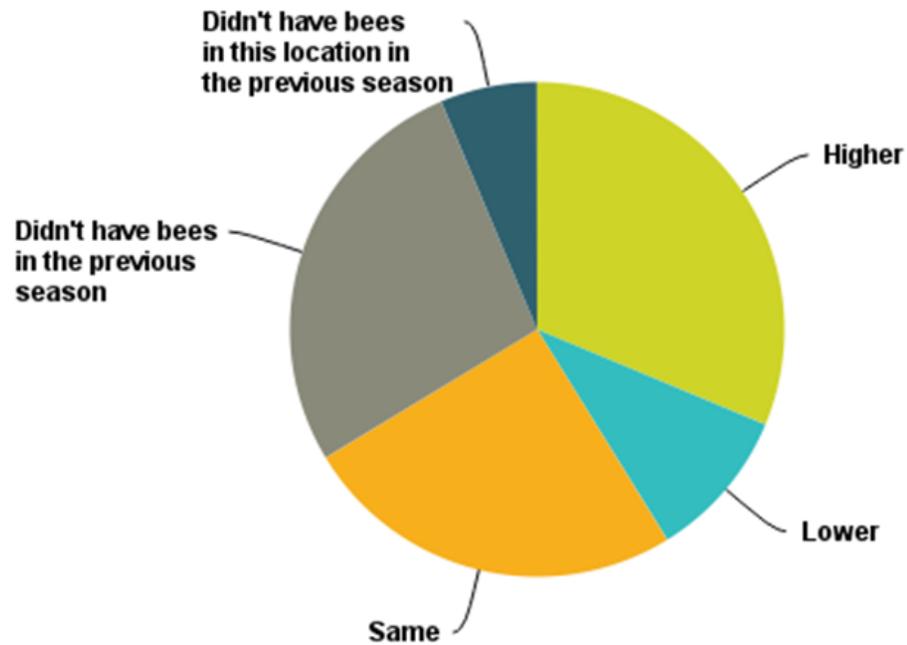


How many colonies did you overwinter and of those how many died?



Were your 2015/2016 winter losses higher, lower or the same in this location as the previous winter?

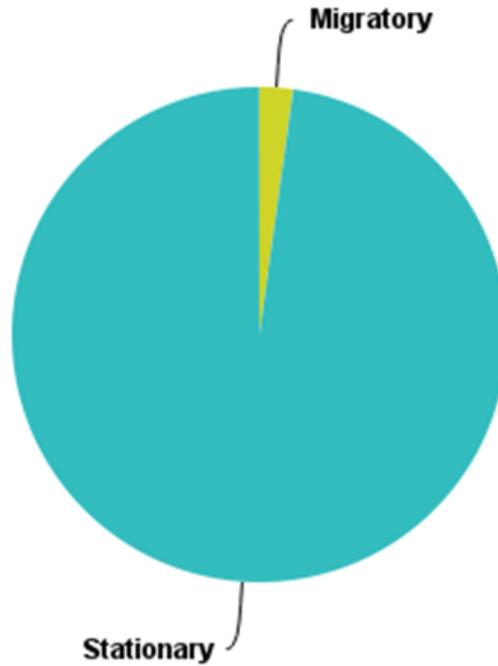
Answered: 505 Skipped: 6



Answer Choices	Responses	
Higher	31.29%	158
Lower	9.90%	50
Same	25.15%	127
Didn't have bees in the previous season	27.33%	138
Didn't have bees in this location in the previous season	6.34%	32
Total		505

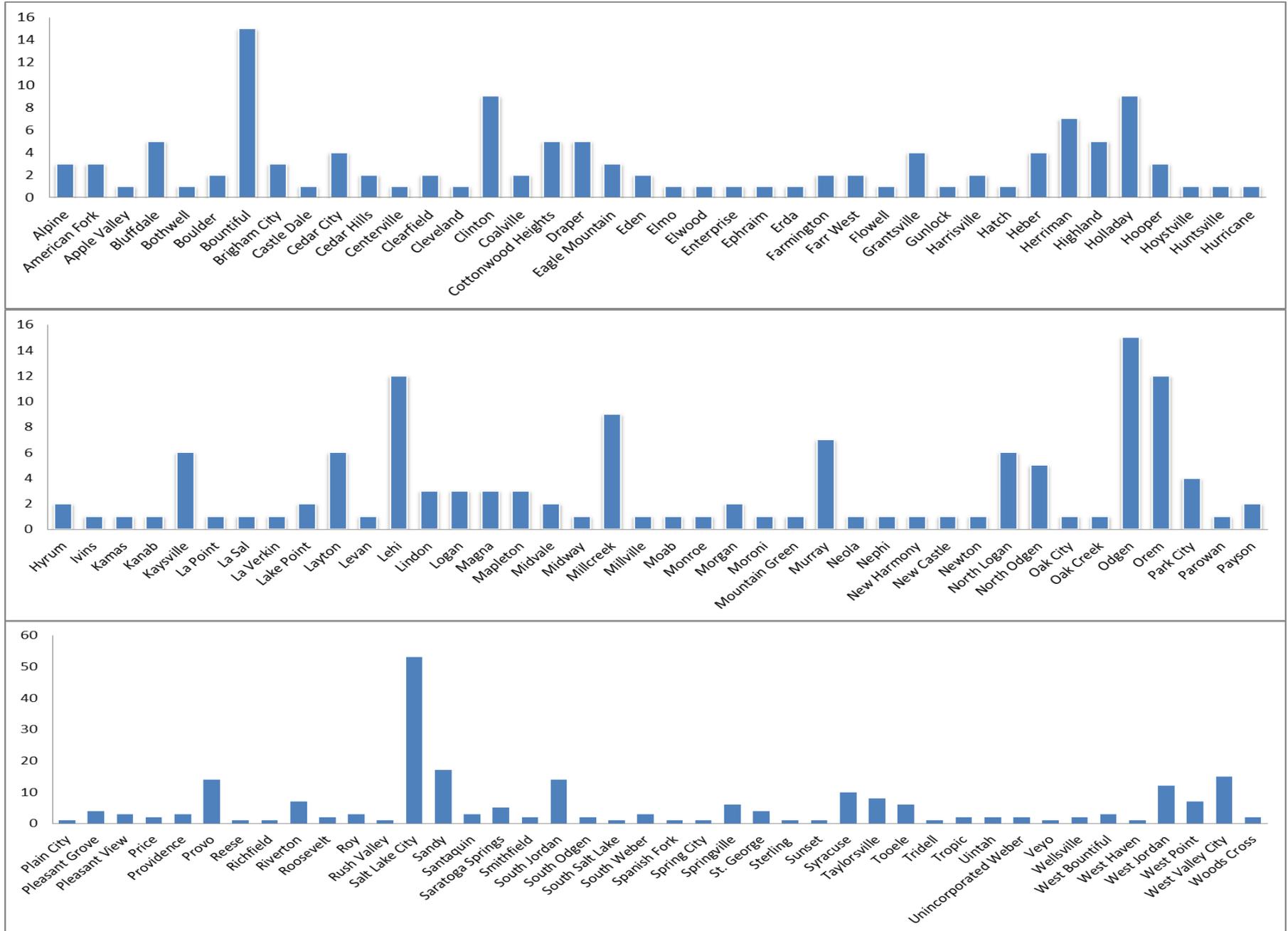
Were the hives in this beeyard migratory or stationary?

Answered: 500 Skipped: 11

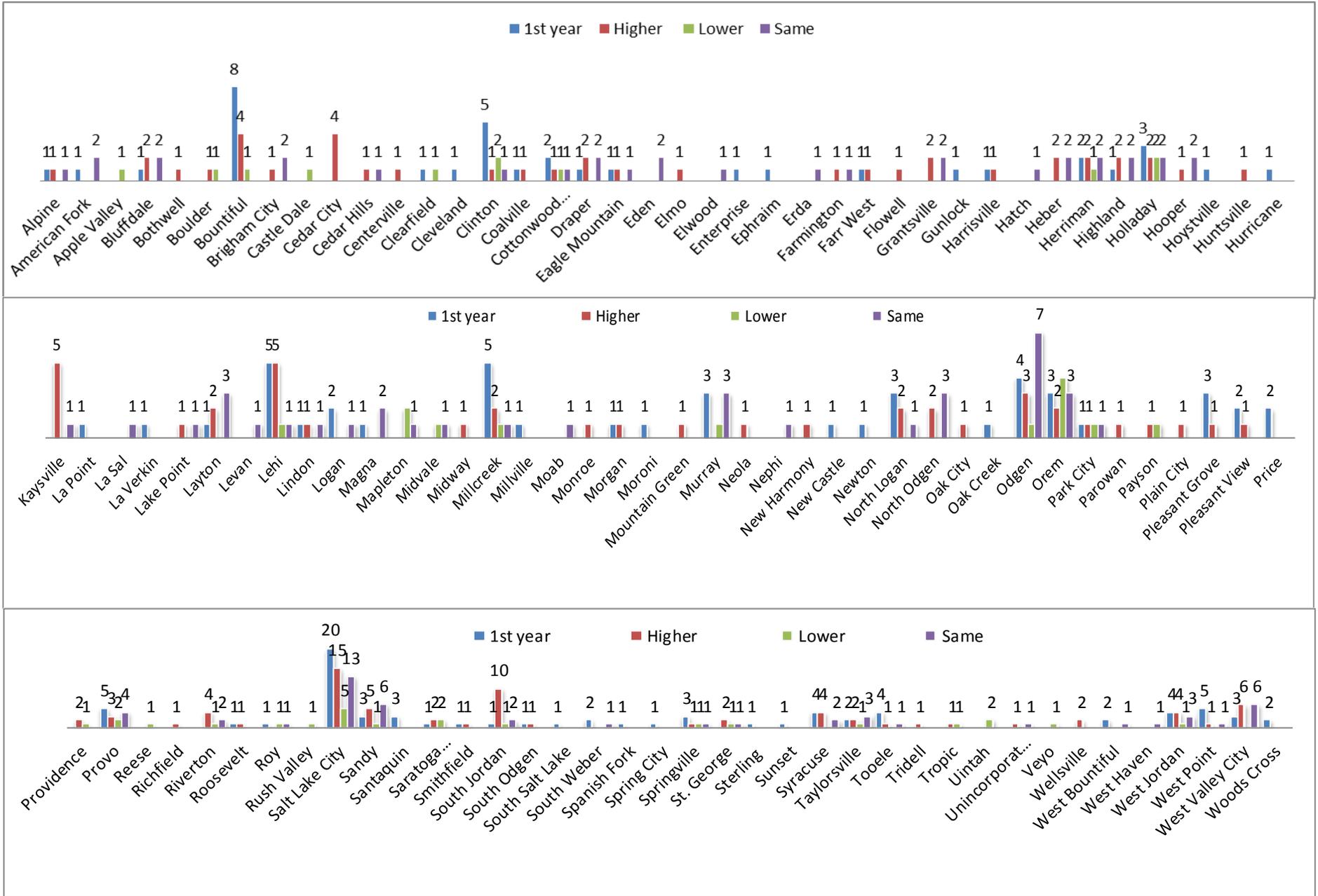


Answer Choices	Responses	
Migratory	2.20%	11
Stationary	97.80%	489
Total		500

Responses by City



Overwintering by City

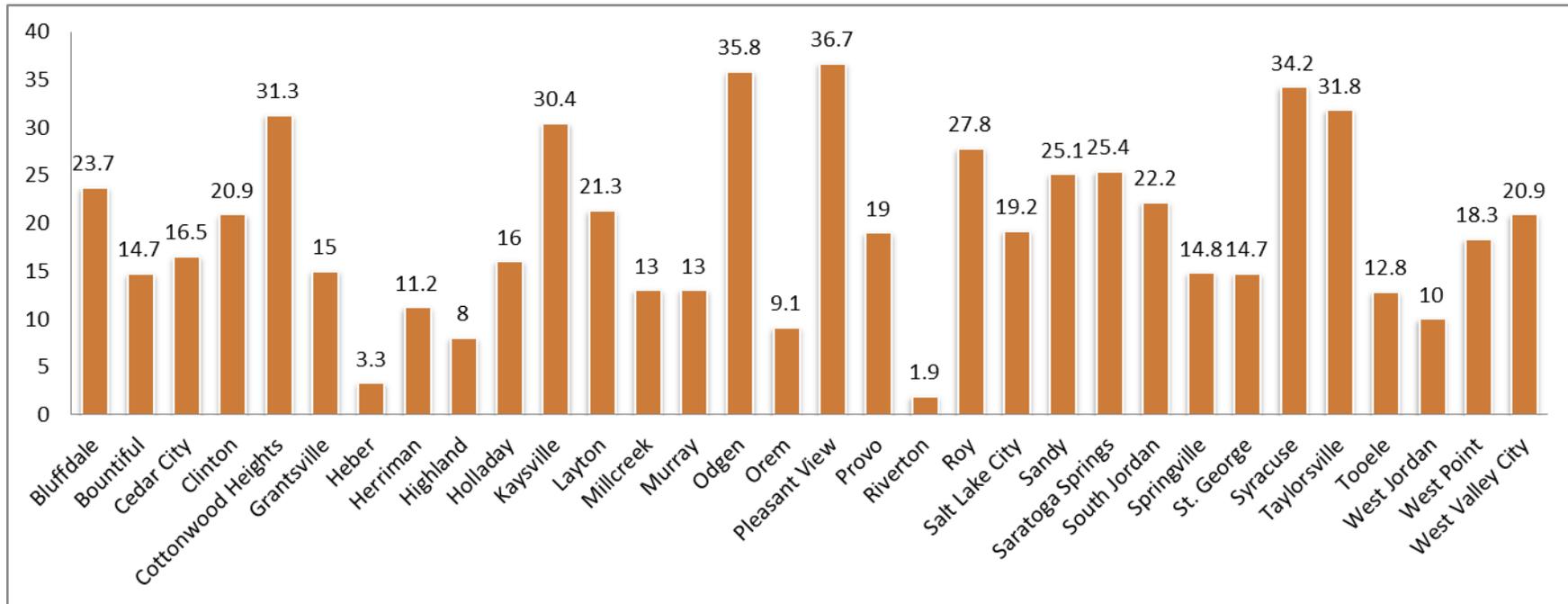


Reported Honey Production

32,946	Total pounds
454	Number of beekeepers
1,410	Number of colonies
73.0	Average pounds per respondent
21.0	Average hive production

Average Honey Production by City (lbs)

(Only those cities with four or more respondents)





Utah Department of Agriculture and Food 2016

For more information about honeybees and beekeeping visit:

<http://ag.utah.gov/plants-pests/beekeeping.html>

Citation: National Agricultural Statistics Service. "Number of Colonies, Yield, Production, Stocks, Price, and Value – States and United States 2013" United States Department of Agriculture. Published 20 March, 2015.