

Get the Facts: Honeybee Registration Fees



TOP 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CALIFORNIA'S HONEYBEE REGISTRATION FEES:

[Click Here to Register](#)

1. Fees go **directly toward protecting your honeybees**.
2. They fund local enforcement, **disease prevention and pesticide safety**.
3. They help **prevent** costly and **devastating pesticide incidents**.
4. You pay **one flat fee, once per year**, no matter how many counties your bees work in.
5. California fees are **competitive with or lower** than fees in other states.

What do registration fees pay for?

Registration fees fund direct, on-the-ground services that help protect honeybees, prevent the spread of diseases and pests and avoid pesticide-related bee losses.

Who enforces honeybee protection laws in California?

California uses a county-based enforcement system. Each county has a County Agricultural Commissioner and trained staff who enforce laws on behalf of:

- The California Department of Pesticide Regulation
- The California Department of Food and Agriculture

County Agricultural Commissioners are familiar with local agricultural practices and provide essential, hands-on enforcement to protect bees.

What happens if a beekeeper does not pay the registration fee?

- Beekeepers who do not register and plot the location of their beehives using the BeeWhere system will NOT be notified of a pending pesticide application near your bees. This puts your bees in danger.
- Fines can be levied on beekeepers who do not register their hives and pay the registration fee.
- The best way to ensure the County Agricultural Commissioner staff carry out critical protections for your bees is to register your hives and pay the required fee.

What specific activities do beekeeper registration fees cover?

Registration fees support County Agricultural Commissioners who work to:

- Enforce laws that require pesticide applicators to notify beekeepers when spraying near hives;
- Check that apiaries are properly marked;
- Monitor hives for honeybee diseases and pests, like American foulbrood;
- Limit the movement of bees or equipment when disease or pests are found;
- Take action to control outbreaks, including cleaning, treating, disinfecting, or destroying affected hives or equipment;
- Maintain hive registration records;
- Help beekeepers register hives in BeeWhere and map their locations.

Who receives the honeybee registration fees?

The California Department of Food and Agriculture does not keep registration fees. All fees are deposited to reimburse counties for the costs of administering and enforcing the Apiary Protection Act in California.

Do registration fees cover all enforcement costs?

No. Registration fees only partially reimburse counties. For example, in 2024, enforcement costs were more than \$1.5 million. Registration fees collected in 2026 are expected to total \$450,000. The remaining costs are covered by county general funds, meaning taxpayer dollars also help support bee protection.

How were California beekeeper registration fees determined?

New registration fees were determined by state regulators with input from the California beekeeping industry and were open to comments from the public.

What is BeeWhere and how does it protect bees?

BeeWhere is California's statewide apiary mapping and pesticide notification system. BeeWhere helps prevent accidental pesticide exposure because it:

- Allows pesticide applicators to identify registered apiaries near planned applications;
- Ensures required notifications are sent to beekeepers before bee-toxic pesticides are applied;
- Enables coordination between growers, applicators, and beekeepers to avoid harm to colonies.

[Click here for 2026 BeeWhere Updates](#)

Do registration fees pay for the BeeWhere system?

No. Registration fees do not fund maintenance of the BeeWhere system itself. However, fees do support the work of County Agricultural Commissioners who educate, assist, and verify that beekeepers are registered and participating in BeeWhere.

Should you have questions or need assistance with BeeWhere, contact information for County Agricultural Commissioners can be found [here](#).

How do California's registration fees compare to other states?

California's fees are competitive with or lower than other beekeeping states. Below are two examples:

Washington State:

- Beekeepers with 1,000+ colonies pay \$300
- Brokers pay \$100

North Dakota

- \$5 license fee
- 15 cents per-hive disease prevention fee
- 10 cents per-hive honey promotion fee
- Large beekeepers may pay \$755–\$1,505 per year

This document was compiled by the California State Beekeepers Association to educate beekeepers with facts about honeybee registration fees in California. Information provided was sourced directly from California's Apiary Protection Act, as authorized under [Food and Agricultural Code §29044](#) and was written with assistance from California County Agricultural Commissioners.