

**From:** BARRY FOSTER <bjfoster@xtra.co.nz>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 26 August 2020 9:37 am  
**To:** Bob Brown  
**Subject:** Re: how much does it cost to replace a whole bee colony?

Hi Bob,

Please feel free to include my estimate as a personal communication in your application.

Kind regards,

Barry

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**From:** Bob Brown <[BrownB@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:BrownB@landcareresearch.co.nz)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, 26 August 2020 at 9:26 AM  
**To:** Barry Foster <[bjfoster@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bjfoster@xtra.co.nz)>, 'Ricki Leahy' <[beechdew@farmside.co.nz](mailto:beechdew@farmside.co.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: how much does it cost to replace a whole bee colony?

Hi Barry,

Thank you for getting back to me with those numbers. I really appreciate it. They should be very helpful for the application. Do you mind if I include your estimate in the application as a personal communication?

Hope you are well.

Best wishes,

Bob

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**From:** BARRY FOSTER <[bjfoster@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bjfoster@xtra.co.nz)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 26 August 2020 8:56 am  
**To:** Bob Brown <[BrownB@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:BrownB@landcareresearch.co.nz)>; Ricki Leahy (<[beechdew@farmside.co.nz](mailto:beechdew@farmside.co.nz)>  
<[beechdew@farmside.co.nz](mailto:beechdew@farmside.co.nz)>  
**Subject:** Re: how much does it cost to replace a whole bee colony?

Hi Bob,

A quick look on trade me finds a lot of hives for sale for \$340 + GST per hive not including honey supers or any thing else. See <https://www.trademe.co.nz/business-farming-industry/farming-forestry/beekeeping/listing-2747429344.htm?rsqid=e5bd9881274748f3b4149f004bf0908f-001>

Some in Golden Bay at \$379 each <https://www.trademe.co.nz/business-farming-industry/farming-forestry/beekeeping/listing-2750588629.htm?rsqid=e5bd9881274748f3b4149f004bf0908f-001> Others around \$350 each.

Ecrotek has Ready to go starter hives at around \$234.78+GST. This is equipment without the bees so deduct the cost of hive ware from the Trade me price and you will get around \$100 for the bees, brood and stores. See <https://www.ecrotek.co.nz/products?keyword=Ready+to+go+hives&pageNum=3> This I think is way too low.

The industry is at a low ebb at present with low honey prices and some honey not moving fast. These prices don't reflect the historical average up to \$1000 each as you quote. This was in the manuka boom times so a more accurate figure for the cost of replacing a hive lost to wasps is probably somewhere in between the past and present prices.

Have a look at Beecroft nucs at around \$300 + GST each <https://www.beecroft.co.nz/bee-nucs>

NZ Honey traders web site has nucs for sale at \$200 each + GST  
<https://www.newzealandhoneytraders.co.nz/products/5-frame-nucleus>

Beezthings has nucleus colonies for \$220 + GST <https://beezthingz.co.nz/buy-bees/>

To answer your question on what a replacement cost of a hive lost to wasps might be the price you arrive at is reflective of the state of the industry and the market for hives. It also needs to reflect the loss of income and once again that differs depending on what you are producing i.e. high UMF manuka honey down to low priced multifloral honey. I will take a stab at it and say \$500 + GST for colony lost to wasps including loss of 'average' profits. Ricki may differ. This would mean that the annual loss of some 7869 hives is costing the industry close to 4 million annually.

I hope that this helps.

Kind Regards,

Barry

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**From:** Bob Brown <[BrownB@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:BrownB@landcareresearch.co.nz)>

**Date:** Tuesday, 25 August 2020 at 3:02 PM

**To:** 'Ricki Leahy' <[beechdew@farmside.co.nz](mailto:beechdew@farmside.co.nz)>, Barry Foster <[bifoster@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bifoster@xtra.co.nz)>

**Subject:** how much does it cost to replace a whole bee colony?

Hi Barry & Ricki,

I'm just finalising the application to the EPA for releasing the biocontrol agents. They were requesting a little more information on cost of wasps to beekeepers.

While I have numbers for total number of hives lost per year to wasps from the Colony Loss Survey, I can't seem to find an average cost for replacing a full colony. Somewhere along the way, I got \$1000 per colony in my head which seems a bit too round a number to be accurate! Any idea where to look for this information? For example, in the 2019 survey 81965 colonies were lost in NZ. Of those 81965, 9.6% were due to wasps which according to my calculation equates to ~7869 colonies that would need to be replaced. I'd like to have a \$ amount to say that is the direct cost of replacement (not including other effects wasp may have).

Any help will be much appreciated!

Thanks!

Bob

**Dr Bob Brown**

Researcher

Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research

PO Box 69040, Lincoln 7640 | 54 Gerald Street, Lincoln 7608

New Zealand

T +64 3 321 9605 | M +64 21 241 4949

E [brownb@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:brownb@landcareresearch.co.nz)

[www.landcareresearch.co.nz](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz)