

# Honey and Beekeeping

Do you know what that buzzing sound is? If you said honey bees, you are correct. These amazing, little creatures are responsible for much more than we give them credit. The success of our economy relies heavily on the impact honey bees have on agriculture. Billions of dollars are generated from the bees' pollination of about 80% of our flowering crops. This is all fine and dandy, but why should you care, right? The 80% of the plants pollinated affect about one-third of everything you eat, mainly fruits and vegetables. So without bees, your diet would consist of basically bread, meat, and water; not so appetizing, is it?

The bees are a huge part of our food variety, but there is a problem with this overlooked dependence. There has been a 35% decrease in the population of bees in the United States, with 8% more dying each year. Entire colonies of bees have been disappearing, leaving no trace behind, and the cause of the issue is unknown. Scientists have termed the disappearance, "Colony Collapse Disorder," and are hard at work trying to figure out the mysterious killer. Many believe that stress combined with the use of pesticides is the main culprit. It is estimated that honey bees will become extinct by the year 2035, or sooner if something is not done.

Among those scientists hard at work to find a solution, are interest groups taking an active role to aid the continued existence of the bees. Right here in Texas, the Texas Beekeepers Association has over 21 active clubs across the state and together they promote and implement preservation practices. An annual convention brings the clubs together and a Honey Queen is named who acts as the official spokesperson for the association.

Now that you know a little more about this little insect, try to imagine what life would be like without these incredible creatures. Honey bees play a large role in the way we live our daily lives. Without them, our economy, as well as our diet and overall health, would suffer greatly. Instead of being frightened next time you see a bee, be thankful for the hard work that little thing is doing for our big world.

## Source(s):

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