



Plight of the Honeybee

IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF AMERICA'S HONEYBEES HAVE VANISHED. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP.

In 2006, America's honeybees started mysteriously abandoning their hives, never to return. Farmers—many of whom rely on the pollinator to help their crops grow (almonds, apples, avocados, blueberries, broccoli, carrots, cherries, and onions are just a few of the foods that require pollination)—are understandably worried, as are scientists, who fear the honeybee may be a modern-day canary in a coal mine. Although the bee die-off, also known as colony collapse disorder, continues to alarm and puzzle scientists and beekeepers, experts hypothesize that the likely culprits are pesticides, dwindling food supply, and a new virus that appears to target the bees' immune system.



THE FLAVOR OF HONEY depends on the flowers the bees visit. Pale golden honeys, such as those produced from alfalfa or clover, sell best in grocery stores. Darker honeys are savored like good wine by aficionados.



ABOVE LEFT: A beekeeper at Blackberry Farm in Tennessee checks his hives.

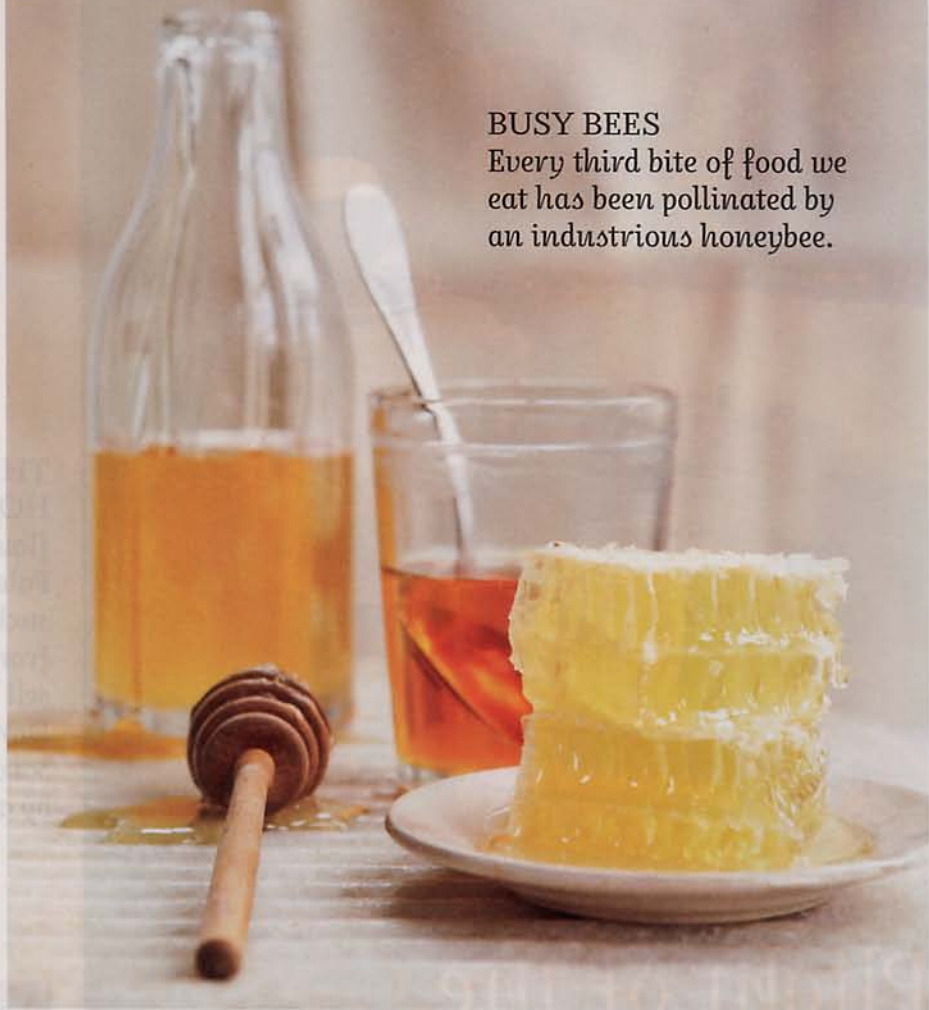
ABOVE: Bees build their combs and store their honey on wood frames, which hang in the hive like folders in a file cabinet.



BEE BUYS

GIVE violet.com's American Honey Flight, which features nine glass vials filled with unique regional honeys, such as Maine Blueberry, Wisconsin Cranberry, and Washington Buckwheat. For the chance to win one of three sets (a \$72 value), visit countryliving.com/sweeps.

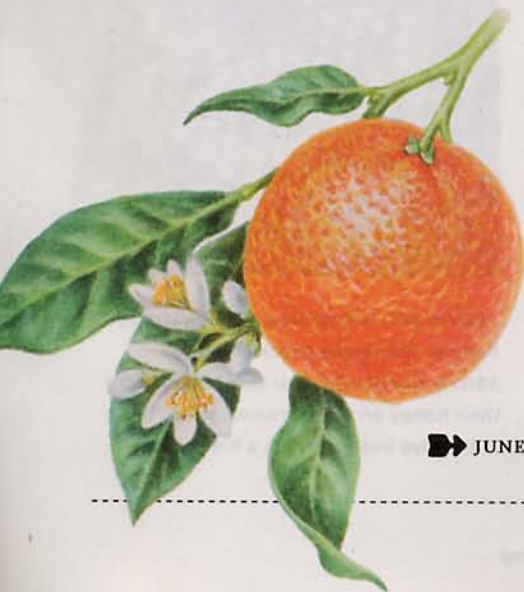
GET Vanilla Honey Bee, a new Häagen-Dazs flavor launched in conjunction with helpthehoneybees.com, Häagen-Dazs's campaign to raise consumer awareness about bees.



BUSY BEES

Every third bite of food we eat has been pollinated by an industrious honeybee.

“The bees’ survival depends on how we manage and protect our world,” says Burt Shavitz, cofounder of Burt’s Bees.



WHAT YOU CAN DO IN YOUR BACKYARD

Replace some of your lawn with flower beds. **Plant** native plant species, which are well-suited for local bee populations. A wealth of honeybee resources—including a free Pollinator Garden Wheel and a poster depicting North American bee species—are available at pollinator.org. **Reduce** or eliminate pesticides and insecticides in the garden whenever possible. Visit organicgardening.com for eco-friendly alternatives. **Choose** plants that flower at various stages in the growing season to provide a consistent source of food for pollinators. For a free packet of bee-friendly flower seeds, visit burtsbees.com.

➔ JUNE 22 TO 28 IS NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK. VISIT POLLINATOR.ORG TO LEARN MORE.