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## Where are all the bees going?

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You may have heard recently that bees are disappearing from their hives seemingly for no good reason. There is still a queen and plenty of honey but the bees fly away never to return. So what's going on?

As it turns out, nobody knows what is happening with the bees but we do know that it has happened every few years all around the globe for at least the last century. The problem has been given a variety of names but is currently being called Colony Collapse Disorder or CCD.

Beekeepers and scientists have a variety of ideas as to what is causing the bees to disappear. Ideas range from insecticides that are sprayed on the crops bees pollinate to cell phone towers disrupting the bees' navigation skills. Most likely the cause is somehow related to all of the human management of bees that takes place in commercial beekeeping. Bees are treated with a variety of chemicals to protect them from mites and other diseases. They are moved frequently, often across country on semi trucks, to meet the pollination needs of farmers. Also we harvest the majority of their honey and then feed them high fructose corn syrup if their food supplies run low.

Whatever the reason for CCD, hopefully the problem will soon be solved or will naturally cycle away as it has in the past. We all depend on the beekeeping industry for much more than honey and beeswax candles. A large portion of food crops around the world depend on bees and their pollination services.

As an end note, the beekeepers we get wax from have not had any significant losses of their colonies and are now busy extracting honey and collecting wax for the season.

- Jennifer