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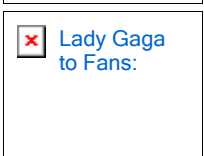
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Jan. 24, 2008

What's Wrong With The Bees?

Steve Kroft Reports On The Mysterious Disappearance Of Bees



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Over the past year, some beekeepers have lost up to 90 percent of their hives. The losses could have serious effects because honeybees help produce a third of the foods we eat. Steve Kroft reports.



Beekeeper Dave Hackenberg (CBS)

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(CBS) In a good year, he can make a \$100,000 profit, but this past year has been a financial disaster. And it all began one afternoon last

November when he checked on some of his hives in Florida.

"When I pulled into a bee yard in Florida, there was 400 hives of bees that three weeks before that looked great. And all of a sudden, here we got roughly 400 beehives that are totally empty," he recalls.

The bees were gone, and Hackenberg says he doesn't know where they went. "I mean, I literally got down and crawled around. I mean, seriously, I got down on my hands and knees and crawled around. And there's no dead bees. There are no dead bees anywhere. I mean, you can't find any bees. They flew off someplace," he recalls.

The bees, Hackenberg says, never came back. It's something he says he'd never seen before.

Under normal circumstances bees don't get lost. They have a sophisticated navigation system that uses the sun and landmarks as points of reference. As a European documentary showed, they can travel up to two miles in search of food, then find their way back home by following the unique smell of their hive. And once there, they are able to direct other bees to the food source by doing what entomologists call "the dance," one of the most intricate languages in nature.

Within a few months, Hackenberg had lost two thirds of his bees. He and his son Davey began calling the Department of Agriculture and beekeepers around the country to see if they were having similar problems. And within a matter of weeks he discovered that many of them were experiencing the same thing.

First, Hackenberg showed *60 Minutes* what a normal hive looks like.

"How many bees live in this hive?" a suited-up Kroft asks.

"This hive here just looking at it probably got close to 35, 40,000 bees in it," Hackenberg explains.

Then he showed Kroft a hive that is suffering from what scientists are now calling "colony collapse disorder," or CCD.

Not only were there no bees, the hive was filled with eggs and larvae. Bees almost never leave their young. The hive was also filled with honey that not even scavengers seemed to want.

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Produced By Andy Court and Keith Sharman

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