

## Pollinator Research & Extension at Cornell

### Dedicated to promoting healthy pollinators for US agriculture

Bees are essential pollinators of our most important fruit, vegetable, nut, and cover crops, and produce an excess of 150 million pounds of honey each year in the United States. Despite their critical importance for agriculture, beekeepers are experiencing excessive colony losses in recent years. Cornell University is dedicated to understanding the stressors contributing to colony declines and developing creative solutions to protect honey bees.

The Cornell Honey Bee Research and Extension Program is leading science toward a resilient future for pollinators through our research and education programs. Our scientific advancements address the major questions surrounding honey bee health and sustainability. We are excited to connect with partners and invite them to join us as we explore the answers.

### Current and Upcoming Projects

- *Understanding pesticide exposure and risk to honey bees.* Cornell's state-of-the-art pesticide detection facility is used to evaluate chemicals found in pollen and beeswax. We determine which pesticides and their combinations pose the greatest risk to honey bee health. We work with growers and beekeepers to develop strategies to reduce this risk. Fewer pesticide residues in hive products means cleaner honey and healthier bees.
- *Assessing the impact of parasites and pathogens on pollinator health.* Parasites and viruses are the biggest culprits of honey bee colony death. Each year, Cornell surveys the prevalence and intensity of these issues in beekeeping operations. Our program has made strides in understanding how these diseases impact sustainable beekeeping and wild bee conservation. Our research helps identify which practices are most effective at promoting good colony health. We train all beekeepers who participate in these programs so they feel better prepared to face these challenges next season, and we make our research broadly available for other beekeepers in the United States.
- *Improving beekeeping businesses.* We would not have contract pollination or honey on our tables without the hard work of beekeepers. With the consistent decline in colony health, many beekeeping businesses have suffered. Cornell is passionate about working one-on-one with beekeepers to improve the profitability and success of their businesses. Our financial analysis and business benchmarking program is the only one of its kind in North America.
- *Educating beekeepers of all experience levels and operation scales.* The Cornell University Master Beekeeping Program trains 125 beekeepers annually in advanced beekeeping practices. It attracts beekeepers from across the US and beyond. A new online Introductory Beekeeping course is currently in development to launch in spring 2021.

Results from our research are broadly shared with farmers, pesticide applicators, veterinarians, and beekeepers.

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