

**LEADING BEEKEEPER WHO LOST MANY BEES TO THE  
MYSTERIOUS COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER SAYS ONE  
MORE DIE-OFF PUTS HIM OUT OF BUSINESS – “60 MINUTES”**

**A Vital Link in the Food Chain, Bees and Their Keepers are in Jeopardy and so are  
The Quality and Quantity of the Crops They Pollinate**

Beekeeper Dave Hackenberg has been stung so many times, he's become immune to the pain and discomfort. But losing more of his honeybees to a mysterious disorder this fall and winter will be a sting he may not recover from. The disorder and the ramifications of Hackenberg going out of business along with others like him, whose bees help produce a third of the foods we eat, are examined in a Steve Kroft report to be broadcast on 60 MINUTES Sunday, Oct. 28 (7:00-8:00 PM, ET/PT) on the CBS Television Network.

Last November, Hackenberg found 400 of his hives -- teeming with honeybees just a few weeks before -- totally empty. "They're gone...and there's no dead bees....They flew off someplace," says Hackenberg. In all, he lost over two-thirds of his 3,000 hives and he's never seen anything like it in his 45 years of beekeeping. But if it happens again this fall, after losing hundreds of thousands of dollars and having to replace his lost hives, "I'm probably out of business," he tells Kroft. [Click here](#) for an excerpt.

And he will not be the only one to drop out among the approximately 2,000 other commercial beekeepers in the country, some of whom have lost up to 90 percent of their hives to what scientists named colony collapse disorder. Over the past year, a third of all the honeybees in the U.S. have disappeared or died off because of CCD and other causes. The U.S. government has gathered a task force of scientists to examine CCD, and they are looking at pesticides, parasites, poor nutrition and a virus, but so far, the disappearance remains a mystery.

"I think the problem is complicated," says Jeffrey Pettis, who is leading the efforts for the Department of Agriculture. "I don't think it's going to come down to a single factor. We're not

going to be able to pin all of these losses on either one factor or even maybe one combination of factors,” he says.

What all these factors add up to, says one honeybee expert, is a message to humans from the bees about our environment. “Either there is not enough food or it’s contaminated. Then they come back to the nest and the nest is contaminated with diseases or mites and so their whole environment is not healthy,” says Prof. Marla Spivak, a respected expert on honeybees from the University of Minnesota. “[Bees are] saying ‘I can’t live here, it’s toxic.’” If the trend in CCD continues, says Spivak, the 90 different crops worth an estimated \$15 billion that bees pollinate will be hurt. “We won’t have the quality fruits. We may not have the quantity of fruits and vegetables....This could mean higher prices at the grocery store,” she tells Kroft.

It could also mean no work for Dave Hackenberg, who says beekeepers are often treated like “the ugly stepchild of agriculture.” As he transports his hives on a huge flatbed truck on America’s highways, the reception he gets – except from the farmers, of course -- is usually a mixture of fear and nervousness. “You get all them things...you know, ‘There’s bees in that truck!’ ....Most of the people in this country have no idea what it takes to put the food on their table.”

This message brought to you by BeeCulture, The Magazine Of American Beekeeping, [www.BeeCulture.com](http://www.BeeCulture.com) and CBS Television

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