

Holiday Helpers

Pollinators: Our Holiday Helpers Need Help, Too

(NAPSA)—There are many holiday helpers who are putting in overtime so you may enjoy this festive season. Think of the package delivery truck driver, the store clerk who helps find just the right gift or outfit, and the grocery store associate who stocks the aisles with all your favorite foods. The work to ensure the holiday season is festive, however, starts much earlier in the year, with the millions of honey bees pollinating key ingredients for holiday meals, some of which may surprise you.

These amazing insects work hard all year long to help make sure your favorite seasonal dishes are on your table. A hive of bees must fly almost 55,000 miles to make just one pound of honey. Now imagine how hard these bees must work to help prepare an entire meal. Take a look at how your holiday meal relies on honey bees and other pollinators:

- Preparing your holiday meal takes time—everyone likes to snack while waiting. Gherkin pickles, salted almonds and artichoke dip are all appetizers that require pollination from bees.

- After waiting all day, you can finally dig in. Cranberry sauce and other side dishes—roasted squash, honey-glazed carrots and brussels sprouts—are all delicious additions to your meal that count on pollinators.

- Need a refill on your apple cider? How about your eggnog? Apple blossoms must be fertilized with pollen, as does the nutmeg that adds the extra flavor in your eggnog.

- No holiday meal is complete without dessert. Pumpkin and apple pies are made up of key ingredients that require pollination.

Bet you didn't realize how many of your favorite dishes rely on bees. As you gather around the table this season, remember bees need to eat, too.

Bees rely on the pollen and nectar from flowers and other plants to thrive. Without diverse nutritional sources, bees don't have the energy that lets them travel, produce honey or perform any of the other tasks they need to survive. This is why the Feed a Bee initiative is working with peo-



Bees visit up to 5,000 flowers a day so that you can enjoy your favorite holiday treats. This season, give back by keeping bees healthy.

ple across the country to grow wildflowers to increase forage areas for bees and other pollinators. If we all give back to help feed the bees, they can continue to produce the fruits, nuts and vegetables we love to eat.



Join the effort to keep our holiday helpers fed. Let Feed a Bee help you give back.

You can also join the effort to keep our holiday helpers fed. Here are three ways you can help improve bee health and increase forage areas:

- Give a gift to pollinators: By visiting www.FeedABee.com, you can ask the Feed a Bee initiative to plant flowers on your “bee-half.”

- Commit to growing your own bee-attractant plants: The Pollinator Partnership's Bee Smart mobile app can help you choose the best plants to grow in your garden to attract bees and other pollinators when the weather warms up in the spring.

- Share your planting photos: Show how you are helping pollinators by using #FeedABee on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr.

To learn more about bees and why they're important, visit <http://beehealth.bayer.us/home>.