Plight of the Honey Bee

COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER AND YOU
What is colony collapse disorder?

- Sudden loss of the colony’s adult bee population with very few bees found near the dead colonies.
- Several frames with healthy, capped brood with low levels of parasitic mites.
- Food reserves that have not been robbed, despite active colonies in the same area.
- Minimal evidence of wax moth of small hive beetle damage.
- A laying queen often present with a small cluster of newly emerged attendants.
Potential causes of CCD

- Pathogens
- Parasites
- Management Stressors
- Environmental Stressors
Neonicotinoids

- Created as a safer alternative to topical pesticides.
- Seeds are treated with the chemicals, which then grow within the plant.
- The chemicals are present in nectar and pollen, which the bees take back to their hive.
- Long-term sub-lethal doses negatively affect learning, memory, and behavior.
The other side of the debate

- Criticism of studies: overdosing of bees.
- Real-world contradictions: Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia use pesticides but suffer fewer instances of CCD.
- “Let science – and scientists – do their work.”
The varroa mite
“A perfect storm of environmental stresses.”
A problem bigger than neonics

- Our agricultural system depends on pesticides
  - Because it depends on monoculture
    - Because monoculture is the best way to keep our grocery stores adequately stocked.
- The Paradox: our system relies on monoculture, but monoculture is unsustainable.
- Environmentalists advocate for the dismantling of our current agricultural system.
Urban and suburban solutions
Bees are friends!

- Bees do not want to sting you!
- Relocate, don’t exterminate!
- Educate yourself!
The Kentuckiana Beekeepers Association
www.kyanabees.com
Works Cited