

Pollination Parties!



1. Imagine that a bee-keeping business was started in your community. Beekeepers handle thousands of bees. How might your community react to this new business? What fears might people have?

2. Take a look at this list of crops that farmers grow. Place a check mark next to any of these crops that you enjoy eating or using or that can be found in your home.

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> apples | <input type="checkbox"/> blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> cantaloupes | <input type="checkbox"/> cotton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cucumbers | <input type="checkbox"/> grapes | <input type="checkbox"/> lima beans | <input type="checkbox"/> peaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pears | <input type="checkbox"/> plums | <input type="checkbox"/> pumpkins | <input type="checkbox"/> soybeans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> strawberries | <input type="checkbox"/> squash | <input type="checkbox"/> tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> watermelons |

Many of the farmers that raise these crops use bee pollination. Bee pollination often makes for stronger, healthier crops. For example, some pears grown with bee pollination are lots bigger than pears grown without the help of bees. Of course, these are only some of the crops that use bee pollination - there are many, many more!

3. If you were a farmer, would you think about using bee pollination? Why or why not?

4. Pick one of the plants from the list above. Use the library and/or the internet to find out more about it. Can it pollinate itself, or does it require the help of bees? After you have learned more about the plant, draw a sequence below in which the plant produces seeds and attracts a bee. Show how the bee "catches" some of the pollen in its pollen basket and flies to another plant to feed. Make sure you show how the bee brings the pollen to the new plant - and thus how pollination occurs.

5. Based on what you have learned from this activity, explain how bees are helpful to us. Think back to the imaginary bee-keeping business in your community. If your neighbors were worried about so many bees, how could you explain their usefulness? Could you tell them what life might be like without the help of bees?