

Dear Editor of the Wishek Star,

Title?

Recently, there has been news of the extinction and endangerment of bees in the country. It should also be noted that this news greatly impacts our state. North Dakota is ranked ^{No. 1} ~~number one~~ in honey production. There are about 500,000 bee colonies in the state, and we have 250 species of native bees, including the ~~Bumble Bee~~, ~~Leafcutter Bee~~, ~~Mason Bee~~, ~~Sweat Bee~~, and the ~~Cellophane Bee~~. You might have heard that the ~~Rusty Patch~~ ^{ed} Bee was endangered. Recently, because of not sighting one for a few decades, it was announced that the ~~Rusty Patch~~ ^{ed} Bee is extinct.

Every winter ~~between 2007 and 2018, there~~ ^{from to} is an average of about 30% of colonies ~~that~~ die, and it is not because of weather. There is no single reason as to why all these bee colonies are dying off. North Dakota became big in honey production because we have a lot of open prairie. However, that was in the past. In the last couple of years, we have gone through an oil boom, which brought many more people ^{and} more development of land along with it. Because of the loss of prairie, there are less wild ^() ~~flowers~~ ^{no space} for the bees to pollinate. Also, the spraying of herbicides and pesticides ^{is} ~~are~~ slowly killing the bees. Even though this might not kill them instantly, over time they are still being exposed to more and more chemicals.

Not only has this been making an impact on our country and state, but it has also directly affected our small town of Wishek. It is no secret that our local Danzig Honey Company is a large business. They travel to their own locations in California and Texas for the winter, and keep their hives in local farmers' fields during the summer. So, if they have such a large business, what is the problem? Well, because of the bee crisis, their business is not able to ship off as many products as they have before. Losing bees ^{means} ~~mean~~ potentially losing the Danzig Honey Company. If our community would lose that company, we would also lose many families that make their income from that company, as well as products in our local grocery store.

Good local angle!

As you may know, my family owns Stan's SuperMarket in Wishek. Even though Wishek Sausage is our best seller, we also sell honey, and creamed honey from the Danzig Honey Company. However, despite the fact that it sells very well, without bees, we would be losing a great product, along with many more products that you might not expect. Our fruits and vegetables are shipped in from all over the country, as well as from some local sources, and because this is a national crisis, this will greatly affect our community's store. As you may know, bees do not only pollinate flowers. They play a crucial role in the growth of the fruits and vegetables that we consume every day. In fact, bees pollinate 75% of all nuts, fruits and vegetables. Seeing the decline of the produce department, would not only be heart-breaking to my family, but also to the Wishek community, and many other surrounding areas of loyal customers.

Hearing this news is heart wrenching, but you can start helping today. Anyone is eligible to have a Certified Pollinator Garden by simply filling out an application on the Master Gardener website. Any community member can also plant a pollinator. Bringing back some native wildflowers would greatly help, because our native bees are used to these plants and they attract them. Reducing the amount of applications of pesticides and herbicides will also help greatly. If you have to spray your gardens, it is a good idea to spray in the evening, or at night as well, because bees are most active during the morning and afternoon. For any help or more information, you can visit the NDSU Extension Publications website to find more tips on different plants that will attract bees. You can also visit "Pollination in Vegetable Gardens and Backyard Fruits" to read more about the benefits of bees and your produce.

(link?)

if?

— spell out on first reference

— Is this a website?
Book?
Publication?

Abigail Deile Wishek FFA ND0062

Without doing this, there is not much of a future for local business owners, or your family. If you want your kids to be able to grow up in a country with healthy, nutritious produce, start making changes now. Consider giving your time to save the bees, and your future.

Sincerely,

Abigail Deile, Local Business Owner's daughter, and loyal community member