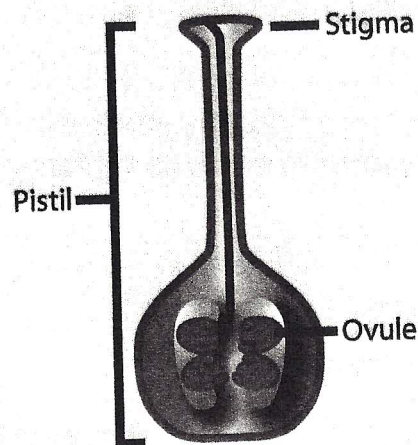


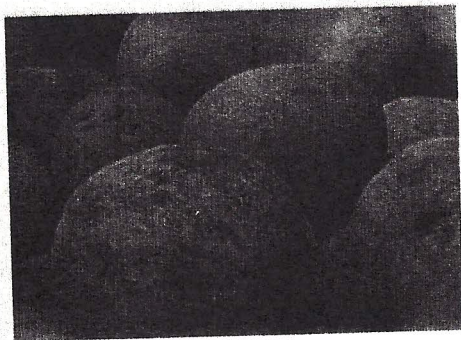
How Pollination Works

In order to bear fruit, most plants must be pollinated.

The most common form of pollination involves the transfer of pollen grains from the stamens, where they are produced, to the stigma. The stigma is the receptive surface of the pistil. Pollen tubes grow down through the pistil to the plant's ovules. The sperm migrate through these tubes to fertilize the ovules.

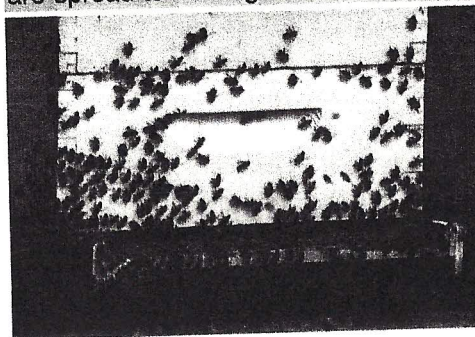
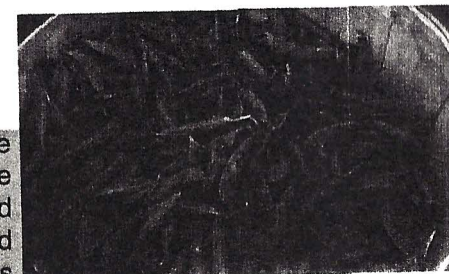


Fertilization is necessary for production of viable seeds and the fruits which surround those seeds. Unpollinated fruits and vegetables are small and misshapen. Unpollinated seed crops are barren.



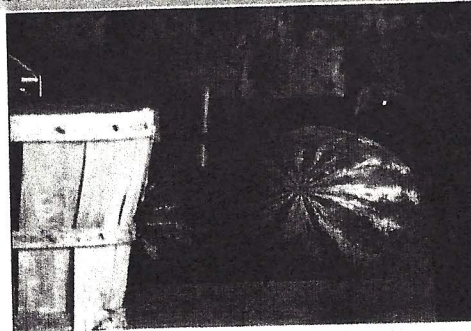
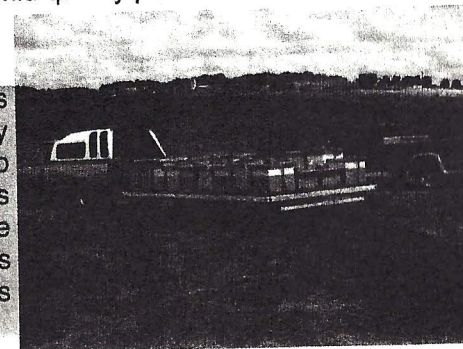
Why are honey bees required for pollination?

A wide range of plants require honey bee pollination. While bumblebees, some solitary bees, moths and even some birds provide pollination, only honey bees can be managed to provide the large scale of pollination required for fruit and vegetable production. Honey bees collect some pollen as a source of protein for developing bees. However, their primary task is collecting nectar from each blossom. In the process, grains of pollen are spread to the stigma of each bloom the bee visits.



In the old days many farmers would keep bees to produce honey for their home and wild colonies abounded in hollow trees. But with the onslaught of parasitic mites, the face of beekeeping changed. A colony left to fend for itself was doomed. The intensive management required to keep bees drove many people away from beekeeping. Colonies in the wild quickly perished.

Today, beekeepers are working hand in hand with farmers to insure the future of America's food supply. Migratory beekeepers are moving their hives from crop to crop to supply the much-needed pollinators. Some beekeepers will move a few hives in the back of their truck, some use small trailers, some even use tractor trailers. Regardless of the method, the bees must be ready when the crop is in bloom so effective pollination can take place.



The grower must be careful not to spray pesticides on the crops while the bees are foraging. If necessary to spray at all, it should be done just before dark, when most of the honey bees have returned to the hive for the night. This and other details have been spelled out in a pollination contract drawn up between the beekeeper and the vegetable grower.

The pollination contract defines the responsibility of each party and the costs to the grower for the pollination services.