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Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD)

There has been a recent rash of news reports concerning a problem that is causing honey bee colonies to rapidly deteriorate and die. The problem apparently was first brought to the attention of authorities in November 2006 by a Pennsylvania beekeeper that had lost approximately 1900 colonies. Since that report there have been a number of other beekeepers, primarily commercial operators, who have reported similar losses.

It should be noted that this is not the first time in the history of beekeeping that such a collapse has been researched. This type of collapse has previously been labeled: *Fall Dwindling*, *Spring Dwindling*, *Autumn Decline*, or *Disappearing Disease*. This is not to say that this is not serious, it is, and with modern methods of information exchange combined with newer testing methods, perhaps a cause will be found.

Some of the, at least what appears to be, common conditions are:

- Predominately migratory operations
- Dead outs are >30% of operation
- Colonies have been put under much stress within 2 months of die out
- Adult honey bees are gone from the hive with no accumulation of dead bees around the hive
- A very small cluster with a queen and young adults may remain in hive
- Brood, pollen and honey stores remain in hive
- No evidence of robbing of dead outs by other colonies in area
- No evidence of wax moth, small hive beetle or other pest problem in dead outs

Other items to note:

- Not all colonies are from the same area of country
- Not all beekeepers have used the same products for disease or parasite control
- No common supplier of queens or replacement bees
- Many non migratory beekeepers have not checked their colonies since last fall
- Northern beekeepers (OH included) may not be able to check colonies for several weeks yet

Current items being researched:

- Mite populations
- Viral infections within bee and food supply
- Fungal infections within bee and food supply
- Chemical build-up in wax comb, pollen, honey, bees
- Genetic connection (brood defects)
- Supplemental feed deficiencies

