

Special Issue

Bees as a Tool for Agricultural Production

Message from the Guest Editor

Bees are a useful tool for agriculture, as they can enhance crop yield and value. Even self-fertile crops that apparently do not need bees, such as Arabica coffee, have increased and better-quality production when these pollinators are included. Incorporating bees as an agricultural input may require changes in pest control strategies; however, as increases in crop value become apparent, farmers will adjust and be willing to test alternative control measures. Additionally, decreased use of pesticides to protect the bees will decrease residues in food and lessen the effect of these agricultural chemicals on the environment.

Paradoxically, grower manuals often neglect to include information about pollination as an agricultural input, even for crops for which there is considerable evidence of improved production, such as coffee, cotton, and, more recently, soybeans. Applied research that considers the costs and benefits of incorporating bee pollination into crop management has the potential to sustainably increase food production and quality with little added cost and, at the same time, protect the consumer and the environment.

Guest Editor

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