

# 8 Busy as a Bee

One third of the world's agricultural production **relies on** the European honeybee, *Apis mellifera*, to pollinate its **crops**.

However, the population of many varieties of bees is declining dramatically.

Scientists are not certain why but they believe that pesticides and chemical fertilizers used in agriculture are a major cause.

Also, some of the flowers which bees love don't grow in fields which are cultivated intensively. Another problem is the *varroa* parasite which enters the **honeycomb** and kills the bees.

**Beekeepers** across Europe, Australia, Brazil, Canada and China are asking their governments to make a plan to **promote** biodiversity to help honeybees to survive.



PESTICIDE APPLICATION  
PLEASE KEEP OFF



major cause



beekeepers

English Humour  
Why do bees have sticky hair?  
Because they use a honey comb!



**relies on** = conta su  
**crops** = raccolti  
**honeycomb** = favo, nido d'ape  
**beekeepers** = apicoltori  
**promote** = promuovere

glossary

1 Read all the information about the bees and do the quiz below.

2 You can use honey in cooking as an alternative to sugar. With a partner, name five different things you can make with honey.

1 What proportion of the world's agriculture depends on bees?  
A A quarter.  
B A half.  
C A third.

2 What is a probable cause of bees decline?  
A Weather.  
B Pesticides.  
C People.

3 What can governments promote to help bees?  
A Biodiversity.  
B Honey.  
C Cereals.



## The Humble Bumble Bee

The British 'Bumble Bee' doesn't exist in Southern Europe. It has a thick, **furry** coat so it prefers cool climates. This kind of bee doesn't produce honey but it pollinates fruit and vegetable crops. Its favourite flower, **clover**, is **disappearing** from England because of intensive cereal **farming** so it is now only common in Scotland and Northern England. The 'Bumble Bee' gets its name from the loud **humming** noise it makes when it flies around flowers.



**humble** = umile  
**furry** = coperto di peli  
**clover** = trifoglio  
**disappearing** = sparendo  
**farming** = coltivazione  
**humming** = ronzante  
**hive** = alveare

glossary

In 2007, Dreamworks made the popular film "Bee Movie". Jerry Seinfeld, the famous American comedian, actor and writer wrote and directed the film. He also played the protagonist Barry B. Benson who doesn't want to work as an ordinary bee in the **hive** but wants to go out to pollinate flowers and see the world. When Barry sees that humans 'steal' honey from bees, he fights to take the honey back to the bees. His actions have serious consequences when the bees stop their work as pollinators and the world starts to die. The film shows the importance of pollination for the food chain. The principal message of the film is clear: "Don't disturb the cycle of Nature. Bees keep the world alive".

**3** Complete the following text on "Bee Movie" using the words below.

**directed - importance - pollinators - American - protagonist**

Jerry Seinfeld is a famous ..... actor, writer and comedian. He .....

"Bee Movie" in 2007 and he also played the part of the ....., Barry B. Benson.

"Bee Movie" makes serious observations on American Society. In this film, Seinfeld shows the ..... of bees as ..... in the cycle of Nature.

**4** Which is the Bumble Bee's favourite flower?  
 A Tulip.  
 B Clover.  
 C Rose.

**5** Where does the Bumble Bee live in Britain?  
 A Wales.  
 B Scotland.  
 C Northern Ireland.

**Answers**

1 C, 2 B, 3 A, 4 B, 5 B

