

Cheerios Giving Bees a Buzz-Worthy 3,300 Acres of Flowers to Pollinate



A bee gathers honey from an orange blossom.

The move may help bee populations soar.

The Huffington Post

Honey Nut Cheerios is the bee's knees.

On April 26, General Mills announced that the farms that supply oats for Honey Nut Cheerios will plant approximately 3,300 acres of habitat for bees and other pollinators by 2020.

It's a size of land that is equivalent to "3,000 football fields," Tom Rabaey, principal agronomist for General Mills, said in a video for Cheerios.

"I think everybody can agree that by planting more habitat, we're going to do a lot of good," Rabaey said.

The habitats will be filled with nectar and pollen-rich wildflowers and planted in partnership with the University of Minnesota and Xerces Society, a leading pollinator and wildlife conservation organization.

The loss of bees can be really stinging. According to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, 75 percent of the world's food crops depend at least in part on pollination.

"Without pollinators, many of us would no longer be able to enjoy coffee, chocolate and apples, among many other foods that are part of our daily lives," said Simon Potts, Ph.D., one of the study's authors and a biodiversity professor at the University of Reading.

Cheerio's video even goes as far as to visually demonstrate what a grocery store's produce section would look like if bees went extinct:

"If we take bees out of our food system, so many of the foods that we rely on for nutrition will start to disappear out of our diet," Jessa Kay, Cruz, senior pollinator conservation specialist at Xerces Society said in the video.

But hopefully this effort will help, as Dr. Marla Spivak, a world-renowned bee scholar at the University of Minnesota put it in the video:

"Pollinator habitats are one of the most effective solutions in ensuring bees get the daily nutrition they need."