

Andalusian beekeepers apply artificial insemination to queen bees to save its population

LOCATION: Colmenar (Málaga)

DURATION: 1:33

SUMMARY: Artificial insemination of queen bees might be the solution to the alarming decline in the population of these insects. In Spain, over the last four years, the number of bees has decreased between a 30 and 40%; the main cause is the use of pesticides in agriculture. The Museum of Honey at Colmenar has organized a course in which 20 beekeepers learn this difficult technique, just mastered by four people in Spain, that allowed them increasing the number of hives and selecting the most resistant species.

VTR:

Beekeepers say it: over the last four years, the number of bees in Spain has decreased between a 30 and a 40 per cent.

ALEJANDRO GARCÍA
Beekeeper

"If there weren't bees we wouldn't have, for example, almonds, apples, pears or tomatoes. Almost a 90% of what we consume is pollinized by bees."

Who are threatened by the massive use of pesticides in agriculture. In the Spanish spring, there is a population of approximately one hundred thousand million bees, but their life cycle lasts forty days and they can't reproduce. The only fertile hive is the one of the queen bee, the survival of the species depends on her.

AMBIENCE

"Once the vagina has been opened and the queen sedated, what we do is injecting semen that we extracted males, which are drone."

It is the artificial insemination of a queen bee, a difficult process that just four people master in Spain and that allows beekeepers increase the number of hives and select the most resistant specimens.

FERNANDO DE MIGUEL
Beekeeper

"A better queen means a better hive and a better harvest, everything is better. And at the same time we guarantee the maintenance of the apiary."

Twenty beekeepers in the Andalusian province of Málaga are learning this technique thanks to a course organized by The Museum of Honey in Colmenar..

FRANCISCO GÓMEZ
Beekeeper

"You have more knowledge about what they are going to do and you anticipate to them. Where a queen may come up and divide the hive, now it is me who divides it and instead of two I will have four or five. I decide, not them."

Once the queen bee is inseminated, it goes to one of these hives, where she will lay 2.500 eggs per day in spring time during the four years that she can live. A work that gives fruits as this almond tree.

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