

My name is Jackie Merriam, and I am the owner of West Meadow Apiary, LLC. We are a deeply rooted, multi-generational Vermont family owned and operated migratory bee business. We have grown our business from two hives to over 2200 hives in the past ten years.

Our business focuses on pollination, queen production, and honey. Our bees are involved with commercial agriculture such as almond pollination in California, blueberry pollination in Maine, apple pollination in Vermont, and pumpkin pollination in Vermont as well as New Hampshire. We have a symbiotic relationship with our growers; their crops get pollinated and our bees get a plentiful source of pollen and nectar.

The honey bees are a very active pollinator, constantly checking food sources for available nectar and pollen. They do visit the corn when it is tasseled, but it is not a plentiful source of food, so they move on. We live in a very florally diverse state and more often than not, there is a more abundant source of food for them.

We have several summer yards located next to corn fields in Vermont managed by commercial dairies. An average yard consists of 32 hives with an estimated 1,500 hives located within the quarter-mile flying distance of corn fields. We have seen no difference in the health of the hives located in these yards. We live in a changing environment, we watch nutrition, varroa mite levels, and other maladies closely. We are the keeper of the bees; it is our job to find yards that benefit our bees, and with our management style, the proximity to corn has no evident negative impact.

*Jackie Merriam*

*2/23/2024*