

Pollen 201

What's on Your Bee's Plate?



Let's look at the nutritional content of pollen...



7%-16%
Water



6%-30%
Protein



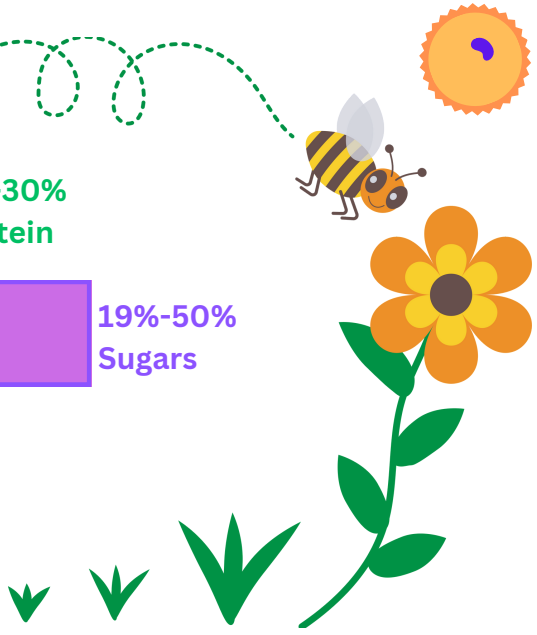
19%-50%
Sugars



0%-11%
Starches



5%
Fats



In order for a honeybee colony to survive it needs to consistently consume pollen that is 20%-25% protein.

An Australian study showed that for every 10 grams of protein required by a colony, foragers need to collect 48 grams of pollen, if that pollen contains 30% protein. If the available pollen has only 20% protein, for example, that same colony needs to forage 72 grams of pollen to get the same 10 grams of protein!



Thus a colony will need to collect 3 kg of pollen at 20% protein but only 2 kg of pollen at 30% protein. This represents a substantial savings to the colony in foraging time, effort and resources.

A range of studies show that colonies need between 25kg and 55kg of pollen per year to thrive. In parts of Australia with a 12 month growing season a colony may need as much as 100kg of pollen per year!

