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When it comes to flowering plants, **honeybees are called generalists**; that is, they may employ a large variety of different plants. **Recent study**, however, has revealed that **honeybees are highly choosy**.

"**Honeybees select specific plants as food resources**, and these selections vary over time and, within a time period, even among bee colonies within the same apiary." "For example, at one point in time, a colony would collect nectar and pollen primarily from different plants," says Helena Wirta, a researcher at the University of Helsinki's Faculty of Forestry and Agriculture.

"Our findings indicate that honeybees are more selective than previously thought, using only a fraction of the available plants." Thus, in order to meet its nutritional requirements, it will most likely require a diverse range of plants from which to select suitable ones." **The study appears in the journal Scientific Reports.**

Bees get most of their carbs from nectar, while pollen provides them with protein and fat. Honey and pollen samples were gathered from beehives for this study. The DNA from these samples was extracted, and the plant origin of the DNA was established.

Plant species differ in the amount of protein and amino and fatty acid content of pollen, as well as the amount and composition of sugars in nectar. Honeybees then select certain plants that give the nutrition they need. **Based on the DNA of the honey and pollen samples used in the study**, bees would collect nectar from raspberries in the mid- and late summer, whereas blueberries and cow parsley would provide both nectar and pollen in the early summer.

Functional Pollination is The Foundation of Food Security

Given the documented pollinator reductions in recent years, the study's findings are timely. **Honeybees are critical pollinators for a variety of plants, including crop plants**, but they are also important pollinators for wild species. Understanding which plants are vital for honeybee nutrition is essential for ensuring that a suitable array of blooms is accessible throughout the summer.

"Because we studied managed honeybees, our findings are particularly applicable to crop species pollination, which affects both the quality and quantity of yields." "**We should consider these new findings to ensure food security, including a variety of plants with high nutritional value,**" says Wirta.