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An Unexpected Essential Worker Helps Feed Millions of Canadians: The Honeybee



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Busy little bees help bring canola and blueberries. Brought into Canada from warmer climates such as California or Hawaii in the spring, Canadian farmers depend on honeybees that have become an essential part of maintaining the food supply, and Air Canada lends its metal wings to support their journey.

In a [Letter to the Editor](#) published on the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada website, the organization's minister, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, said that farmers rely on nearly 250,000 honeybees and 40,000 bee colonies imported into Canada to pollinate their crops. Without them, there is a risk that growing yields could decline and cause food shortages.

Unlike regular cargo, living queen bee shipments need to be kept at specific temperatures during their travel. Commercial passenger flights are ideal to transport bees because cargo holds are kept warm enough for the journey. Although Covid-19 has disrupted passenger traffic to many areas, these essential workers will be able to clock-in for their yearly pollination across Canada.

"When bees arrive, we move them from the aircraft into our holding facility where we handle live animals. The facility is kept at room temperature and bees are stored in an area with proper air circulation. The packaging is thoroughly inspected to ensure everything meets our safety requirements. About 45 minutes before they are scheduled to depart, a designated loader brings them to the plane to load them into the aircraft's cargo hold with extra care and priority," said Godymar Billedo, Customer Service Manager at Air Canada Cargo.

Through its [AC Animals solution](#), customers have a designated shipping solution available to fly live animals. Air Canada Cargo staff is specially trained to handle all types of live animals, which include bees and other insects along with family pets and other animals.

Air Canada and Air Canada Cargo are proud to be a part of the effort to make this possible.





A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 