

**Response from Real Texas Honey™ beekeepers
on the Proposed Release of *Bikasha collaris* and *Gadirtha fusca*
For Classical Biological Control of the Chinese Tallow Tree
March 13, 2021
(RealTexasHoney.com)**

Real Texas Honey™ promotes honey produced in Texas. The USDA and the Texas Department of Agriculture have helped us market our honey produced here in Texas through the specialty crop program.

Currently Texas produces 7-8 million pounds of honey annually
Eradicating Tallow would reduce production to less than 2 million pounds
75% of the honey produced in Texas is from the Tallow tree

Tallow is the most dependable source of abundant forage for pollinators.
Without it, beekeeping in the US would be in peril.

Bottom line, by eradicating Tallow trees and its beneficial forage to pollinators, you would be eradicating the profitability of managing honey bees across the US. Over 70% of managed honey bees in the US are sent to the gulf coast region in late March after CA Almond pollination. Beekeepers raise new colonies and queens on the early spring forage, including Tallow. They are then shipped all over the US for pollination and honey production.

Honey bees are the most efficient and manageable pollinators that actually produce 1/3 of the food we eat. There is already a bee shortage for crops requiring pollination.

All pollinators feed from nectar and pollen from natural forage to survive. Eradicating the Chinese Tallow tree would reduce ~65% of the nectar available to all pollinators in the Gulf coast region.

Beekeepers are already struggling
40% annual colony losses
Decline in natural forage (from development)
75% of US honey is imported driving down our market

Summary

No Tallow trees = ~65% less nectar = beekeeping not profitable = beekeepers out of business = no pollinators = 1/3 less food across the US & ~75% less honey produced in Texas

