

## **Conclusion:**

A future that is not dependent on industrialized bee pollination is also one where humans become closer with nature. After the bees could no longer be depended upon, the old system of food distribution could not be maintained. The new system that is supported by small individual and local farms, rather than massive and industrial mono-crop farms, is more reminiscent of natural processes. Under the old system, the average human had little to no part in the food production process. The majority of food was purchased at supermarkets, so there was a major disconnect between the consumer, and the actual process of creating that food. In addition, many foods were processed, which further removed people from the natural world, as they consumed such artificial renderings of sustenance.

With the bees all but extinct due to the over-specialization of the old system, the new system began to evolve, and everyday people were inserted back into the growing process. The new socio-technical system reveals the natural operations of cultivating food. It is an unnatural practice to have enormous fields of a single crop, harvested en masse and distributed to the far corners of the Earth. Small local gardens bring humanity back to its roots, quite literally, as the individual is now responsible for growing his own food, as opposed to simply purchasing it. Additionally, the new system does not have room for heavily processed food items, with excess consumption all but outlawed due to the shortage of food. Food items such as these were able to be produced when food was plentiful, but now they do not make sense. With people eating mostly home grown and/or homemade foods, they are brought back to what is natural, as opposed to artificial and manufactured.

Though the new system is certainly more natural than our previous ways, it still controls nature. A garden is still an imitation of nature; it is human beings taking nature and reducing to a small manageable size so it can be manipulated to produce food. But this type of small scale control is much more balanced than the large farms of before; those farms represented unrestricted control, while the system of smaller local farms allows humans to control nature while maintaining its integrity. Sustainability in this case means there are fewer inputs to the system, and it is more integrated so that if one piece fails, the whole crop will not fail.

Relying on the fruits of individual and local farms brings a much greater balance between technology and nature. Instead of using technology to completely dominate nature, the technology follows natural processes in order to make it more beneficial to humans, but not overshadowing it. For example, hand pollination is a technology that came about to remedy the decline of bees and loss of industrialized pollination. It controls nature in that it is humans using brushes to pollinate plants as opposed to animals, but it mimics the job of the bee, and so creates a sort of harmony between technology and nature. New pollination technologies like specialized fans help to supplement hand pollination and create a larger yield. However, even with new technologies, people now recognize more than ever the need to be truly 'sustainable'. The fans mimic wind patterns that naturally pollinate other types of crops, to bridge the gap until the environment can support insect pollinators again. People know that solutions like this are not ideal and not long term. Now, when people think of 'engineering', or 'technology', they are more likely to look to the environment for guidance, instead of simply trying to conquer nature to fit their needs. Any interaction with nature is now mediated by this acknowledgment of past failures; people know they have to work with nature, not against it. In practical terms, for food systems, this means people spend more time thinking about, growing, and preparing food.