

A Bee Heist? \$52K In Bees Stolen In Fresno County

By Ezra David Romero

A simple way beekeepers can protect themselves is to mark their hives with a unique name and telephone number.

Credit <https://www.fresnosherriff.org/admin/media-relations/606-recent-hive-heists-total-more-than-50-000.html>

A crime that’s caught the Fresno County Sheriff’s attention recently has little to do with gangs or weapons, it has to do with something that flies.

Bees.

Last week, thieves stole \$32,000 worth of bees and their hives from a ranch near Coalinga and \$20,000 worth near Firebaugh, according to Fresno County Sheriff Spokesman Tony Botti.

He says every year thieves target and steal hives across the region.



BOTTI: *“Growers pay good money to have these beekeepers set their hives in a proper place and let the bees do their job, but unfortunately there are elements of the population that want things done for free.”*

With spring around the corner, growers rely on bees to pollinate crops. Botti says most bee thefts happen at night when bees are dormant. He also says hive thieves are often experienced in beekeeping and will add the stolen bees to their inventory.