

# LET'S STOP QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY



## January 2022

Inside this edition:

- Managing summer peaks
- Home gardeners and fruit fly
- Fruit fly and commercial orchards
- Fruit fly hot spots
- January activity and outlook
- Remove unwanted host plants and help stop the spread
- Infested fruit and vegetables

### Managing summer peaks

No single action will stop the spread of fruit fly, instead an integrated management approach is essential in controlling the pest and protecting home grown produce and our region's multi-million dollar horticultural industry.

Fruit fly activity will continue to increase throughout January until April, with a small drop likely during January when very hot dry weather occurs. Area wide management of fruit fly requires action from the community, growers and industry, together with government. Continued vigilance and an ongoing commitment by all is necessary to help manage summer population peaks.

High risk summer fruit and vegetables include:

- Cherries
- Peaches
- Tomatoes
- Capsicums
- Apricots
- Nectarines
- Plums
- Chillies



### Home gardeners and fruit fly

Fruit fly move from urban sites through peri urban areas over summer and into commercial orchards during late summer and autumn.

Effective fruit fly management in townships and urban areas early in the season will assist in reducing the impact of the pest on commercial growers later in the season. Home gardeners can undertake a few simple measures to help reduce the spread of fruit fly:

- Remove unwanted fruiting plants
- Harvest fruit and use or destroy all harvested fruit
- Place traps out and check regularly for signs of fruit fly
- Check ripening fruit for sting marks or maggots
- Place netting over whole plants, fruiting branches, fruit trusses or individual fruit to protect crops
- Baiting is not recommended for backyard growers unless everyone in the area starts and continues baiting together



### Fruit fly and commercial orchards

It is recommended that growers place traps in orchards and surrounding the house and conduct regular inspections. Traps, lures and toxicants should be within their use-by date and replaced or re-charged as per label instructions.

If your orchard is close to a hot spot increased monitoring is recommended. Crops and other fruiting plants in and around orchards, house paddocks, front yards, roadsides and creek banks should be closely monitored. In more remote areas fruit fly numbers will commence building up in late summer and early autumn.

Baiting is an efficient control method in controlling fruit fly, so ensure you have stock in storage inside the use-by date. This is particularly important if fruit fly was present in your area last year.

### Fruit fly hot spots

Extra monitoring and control efforts are required in the following hot spot areas:

- Echuca
- Kyabram
- Mooroopna

Trap locations in these areas have recorded an increase in fruit fly populations.

### January activity and outlook



There is a risk that adult flies that survived winter were able to survive longer into late spring than in previous years, giving them more time to infest more fruit than usual, which may impact populations.

Weather forecasts for January are favourable for fruit fly survival and population build-up, however normal high temperatures and predicted rainfall during January 2022 is expected to cut the growing population significantly. This is due to lower availability of atmospheric moisture to adults (although home and orchard irrigation will negate this), low moisture causing fruit drop and smaller fruit, leading to fewer fruit for fruit fly to infest. The impact of high heat killing adults as well as eggs and larvae in exposed fruit (on ground and on-tree) and pupae in exposed ground also effects populations. This scenario generally occurs in the Goulburn Murray Valley but it has not been the case for a number of years recently, due to an extended La Niña weather pattern existing in South Eastern Australia from March 2020 to early 2021. Currently another La Niña weather pattern is in place but, despite this Bureau of Meteorology data suggests that La Niña will not lead to increased monthly rainfall for January 2022.

### Remove unwanted host plants and help stop the spread

The removal of unmanaged fruit trees eliminates a potential breeding ground and helps protect the region against fruit fly. If you're a property owner or home gardener with a fruit tree you no longer want or find difficult to manage, you can apply to have it removed free of charge through the Goulburn Murray Valley Area Wide Management Program's free Fruit Tree Removal Program. The program has allowed for the successful removal of potential breeding grounds across the region, making it harder for fruit fly to get a foot hold and spread.

Collect an information pack from your local participating Council and complete and return the tree removal form to have your unwanted fruit tree removed.



### Infested fruit and vegetables

Fruit fly attack and damage a wide range of fruit and vegetables, leaving it inedible. Fruit and vegetables effected by fruit fly should be placed in a sealed plastic bags and placed in the sun for five to seven days to destroy the larvae. Infested fruit and vegetables can also be heat treated by placing it in the microwave.



### DID YOU KNOW?

In a matter of just 30 days and under the right conditions fruit fly are capable of searching for and finding suitable fruit to lay their eggs and restarting the cycle, which allows for population explosions to occur in short timeframes.

WINNER REGIONAL ACHIEVEMENT & COMMUNITY AWARDS VICTORIA - 2019

WINNER REGIONAL ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR VICTORIA - 2019

Station Street, Cobram Vic 3644  
PO Box 578, Cobram Vic 3643  
t: (03) 5871 9222 f: (03) 5872 1567  
e: gmfruitfly@moira.vic.gov.au