

LET'S STOP QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY



August 2022

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Community awareness and education



The Goulburn Murray Valley Area Wide Management Program would like to thank all those who took part in the recent online fruit fly community survey. We received a terrific response and will use the information from the survey to shape our education activities over the coming months and beyond.

By understanding the community's knowledge of fruit fly and different control options we are able to identify the necessary areas to focus our community engagement and education activities.

Effective area wide management of the pest requires a whole of region, coordinated approach to protect our horticultural industry and the broader community from the potentially devastating impacts of fruit fly to markets and home grown produce.

August activity and fruit fly movement

As we move to the warmer weather and into spring adult flies will start to wake up after their winter down-time – a type of hibernation where they just hang on until it's warm enough to fly and mate. Dense, evergreen trees like lemon and loquat trees are favoured winter refuges, so extra vigilance in these areas is important over winter. Adult flies in warmer areas are looking for carbohydrate and protein: carbohydrate for energy and protein for sexual maturity as they come out of their winter slumber.

They've used up most of their reserves to survive winter and now need to replenish these reserves to be able to survive. Carbohydrates can come from flowers (nectar) and protein from yeasts, fungi and bacteria growing on branches. The greater the number of flies that are able to survive the previous summer and autumn the more that will survive the winter by finding warm refuges. These flies will essentially be invisible at this time of year and may be present in very high numbers.

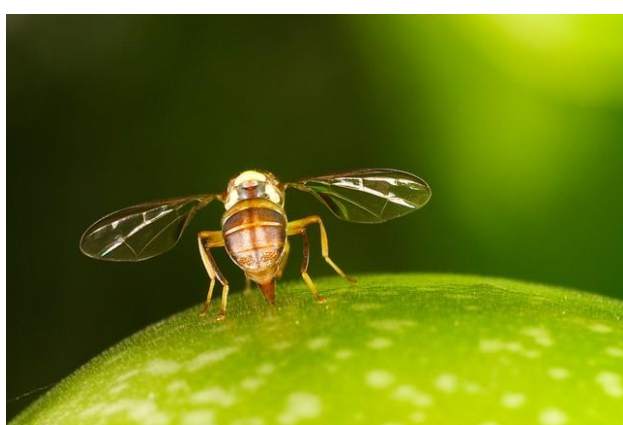
If you have lemons and had fruit flies in your fruit last season, try putting a male or female fruit fly trap or two nearby to check if these pests are starting to move.

Stop the spread - action required

Flies mate at dusk when the temperature is 16°C or more at sunset. If there are areas where this temperature is reached flies have the ability to mate at this time of the year. If the temperature is warm enough and reaches 16 °C or over they are able to mate and lay eggs into fruit one or two days later.

Qfly can survive the winter in the Goulburn Murray Valley and do so as adult flies. Fruit fly eggs, larvae and pupae that are in fruit or in the soil after mid-April generally will not survive the winter unless they exist in spots where a warm microclimate persists. If they can find refuge from cold, wind and rain adults will survive the winter.

Weather predications for continued higher than average rainfall leads to higher than normal minimum temperatures which encourage fruit fly survival. It may also promote early set of fruit which could become an early target for Qfly. This may increase the numbers produced in the first generation of spring.



Inspect and monitor to reduce population build-ups



The regular inspection of fruit is essential to the early detection of fruit fly. Fruit fly traps are an ideal way of determining whether or not fruit fly is present in our garden, yard or orchard. It is recommended traps are deployed all year round. Once detected, fruit fly baits are the best method of controlling fruit flies.

Look out for black marks and soft spots on early ripening fruit that may indicate fruit fly stings. If you can suspect fruit open and hold it up to the light you may be able to see eggs and young larvae glistening in the fruit pulp. Loquats, apricots and winter citrus are the main culprits at this time of the year.

If you have stung loquats or late-hanging autumn fruits (like pomegranates, quinces and apples) pull them off, or rake them up and feed them to the chooks or destroy them in plastic bags or by deep burial. Fruit fly effected fruit must NOT be placed in the compost heap where its warmth and humidity provides one of the best spots for them to survive – not die.

Orchard hygiene and essential tasks

Practicing orchard hygiene is essential in stopping the spread and includes:

- o Remove and use or destroy nearby fruit left on trees during winter in the orchard and house yards
- o Pick up and destroy fruit that is on the ground
- o If you see fruit on Crown land, creek banks, abandoned premises or roadsides let Council or the Regional Fruit Fly Office know
- o Remove fruiting plants you no longer need
- o Use fruit fly traps to assess if fruit fly are present
- o Check any fruit that is near your orchard for signs of fruit fly – sting marks on the fruit surface, softening patches in the fruit flesh, eggs and/or larvae in fruit
- o Ensure you have access to baits and approved pesticides for Qfly control if trap numbers get too high



Free Fruit Tree Removal

The removal of unmanaged fruit trees eliminates a potential breeding ground and helps protect the region against Qfly. Property owners and home gardeners with fruit trees they no longer want or find difficult to manage, can apply to have them 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.

Fruit fly control and management

For more information on fruit fly control and management visit www.fruitflycontrol.com.au or scan the QR code.

For assistance in managing fruit fly, contact the Goulburn Murray Valley Fruit Fly Office by phoning (03) 5871 9222 or email gmfruitfly@moira.vic.gov.au.



DID YOU KNOW?

During the winter cold Qfly are not attracted to lures inside traps as it is generally too cold for Qfly to fly at temperatures below 13 °C.

WINNER AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION AWARD VICTORIA - 2019

WINNER REGIONAL ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR VICTORIA - 2019

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Logos for various organizations: Regional Achievement & Community Awards, Campaspe, Moira, Shepparton, Agriculture Victoria, Peak Green Victoria, Goulburn & Shepparton Fruit Growers Association, Moira.

www.fruitflycontrol.com.au

The GMV Fruit Fly Program is supported by the Victorian Government

