

LET'S STOP QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY



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Inside this edition:

- Winter is the time to target evergreen trees
- Online community survey
- Increased population expected
- Free fruit tree removal program
- Fruit fly in rural areas

Winter is the time to target evergreen trees

Adult fruit flies are able to survive winter by taking refuge in warm spots until temperatures increase. Evergreen trees such as orange, lemon, grapefruit, feijoa, olive, loquat, guava and avocado trees located in urban and peri-urban areas or near houses and on farm buildings provide the ideal protection for Queensland fruit fly (Qfly). Regular inspection of evergreen trees over the winter months is essential and may reveal fruit fly in a slow metabolic state on the under-side of leaves.

Data from the Goulburn Murray Valley (GMV) regional trapping grid indicates higher than normal numbers of adult flies have entered the winter season and sought refuge in warm spots. .

When temperatures rise above 16°C flies become active and seek out food sources and a mate to breed, this activity slows down in winter however warm pockets provide a refuge for fruit fly so continued vigilance is required.



Online community survey open

The Queensland fruit fly online community survey is currently open. We're asking property owners and home gardeners to share with us what they know about fruit fly. The survey findings will help us identify opportunities to further support and educate the community about fruit fly control and management.

The short survey will take you about 2 minutes to complete and does not require you to share any personal information.

Visit our website at www.fruitflycontrol.com.au to complete the survey or scan the code.



Increased population expected

Weather conditions in the Goulburn Murray Valley point to the probability that Queensland fruit fly will survive the winter in greater numbers than in previous colder, drier years. It is important to make sure all fruit and fruiting vegetables are harvested and used or picked up and destroyed.



Key winter tasks include:

- Destroy fruit by sealing in plastic bag (leave in the sun for 5 days and then throw out with the weekly garbage or compost), freezing, microwaving, burning, cooking, drying or immersion in water
- Pick up and dispose of any fallen fruit that may be in your yard, on the nature strip, on nearby creek banks or parks.
- Prune your trees to keep them at a manageable height for next season's fruit picking or for netting.
- Check ripe and ripening fruit for signs of fruit fly infestation – soft patches, brown to black sting marks, maggots. If found, pick the fruit and dispose of it as above.
- If you have traps out – whether they are male-targeting or female-targeting, make sure that they are within the use-by date. If not, put new ones out or recharge them with new baits.
- If you don't have traps out consider putting a few around the house, especially in evergreen foliage near the house, the fowl yard or the compost heap - e.g. the lemon tree.
- Netting around most trees can be removed now but keep it there if you have ripe or ripening fruit still in your yard. Remember that olives can be attacked by fruit flies when they are black and ripe.
- If you have fruit trees that you don't use – e.g. feijoa, guava – consider removing them completely and replacing them with an attractive non-fruiting plant.

Free fruit tree removal program open

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 in rural areas

If your property is close to (within 500m) of the hot spot areas mentioned below or near untended host plants, or feral hosts along roads, channels or in abandoned orchards you should keep a very close watch on:

- Fruit fly traps (both male and female targeting) are most useful when deployed in and around susceptible orchards all year round. Check your traps at least once a week.
- Any ripe or ripening fruit (in your orchard, in your house yard, including the front yard, or along the road or channel bank) that might show signs of infestation (e.g. sting marks, abnormal fruit softening). Check your fruit (for sting marks and/or eggs and larvae inside them) at least once a week.
- If you have had Qfly problems previously it is advisable to ensure you have access to suitable quantities of fruit fly bait so that if fruit flies are found in fruit or in high numbers on traps you can commence your baiting program straight away



DID YOU KNOW?

Qfly do not hibernate in the ground over winter, they survive in evergreen trees where they are protected from the cold.

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