

# LET'S STOP QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY



## December 2022

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### Summer snapshot

Queensland fruit fly numbers are on the rise and will continue to steadily increase throughout summer. It is important home gardeners, property owners and growers are fruit fly ready and have activated their control strategies as we enter the peak growing season.

Fruit fly control across home gardens, urban properties and orchards will help reduce the spread of fruit fly in our region. Fruit fly breed and multiply in numbers extremely quickly, so taking steps to control fruit fly is essential.

There is no single action that will stop fruit fly – a combination of different measures is required. Anyone with a fruit tree or veggie patch can help stop the spread by undertaking a few simple control measures:

- Protect with netting, bags or sleeves to prevent fruit fly reaching your fruit
- Inspect fruit regularly
- Prune your trees to keep them to a manageable height
- Pick and remove fallen or rotten fruit and correctly dispose of damaged fruit
- Use traps to monitor and catch fruit fly
- Apply baits and use traps to reduce populations
- Remove unwanted fruit trees and replace with non-fruiting alternatives



### Free Fruit Tree Removal Program

The removal of unmanaged fruit fly habitat eliminates potential breeding grounds and is an effective option to control fruit fly. If you have a fruit tree you no longer want or can't manage, have it removed free of charge through the free Fruit Tree Removal Program. By removing unwanted fruit trees and host plants, it is harder for fruit fly to find suitable habitat to lay eggs into and breed.

The tree removal program is provided free of charge to land and property holders and allows for the removal of unmanaged fruit trees and plants from orchards, private residences, and public areas such as nature strips. Pick up an application form from participating council's customer service centre or visit [www.fruitflycontrol.com.au](http://www.fruitflycontrol.com.au)

### Dispose of infested fruit correctly

If you have a fruit fly problem, it's essential that you dispose of infested fruit correctly. Before fruit is disposed of, all flies and eggs must be killed.

Collect all effected fruit and vegetables and place it in a plastic bag – it's best to double bag the fruit. Securely knot it and place it in the sun to solarise for 14 days. Another option is to put your infested fruit in a bag and sit it in the freezer for 2 days or zap it on a high heat in the microwave. Once you've done this, you're ok to throw the treated fruit in your rubbish bin.

Never put this fruit in your green bin, compost pile or warm farm – because Queensland fruit fly can live and emerge from these environments.

Fruit flies are often not discovered until fruit is cut open and their white creamy maggots are noticed. Inspecting your fruit and vegetables regularly while it's still on the tree or plant will help in identifying fruit fly early – look out for puncture marks or small brown sting marks on the outside skin.

Correctly disposing of fruit and vegetables that have been attacked and ruined by fruit fly is an important step in stopping the spread.



### Hot spot areas to monitor

A number of locations have been identified as sites of concern through the Goulburn Murray Valley regional trapping grid. If you live in or near the below potential hot spot locations, place monitoring traps out and check nearby ripening, ripe or overripe fruit for the presence of fruit fly. Locations requiring extra vigilance include:

- Kyabram
- Shepparton
- Mooroopna
- Tatura
- Cobram

### Fruit fly activity in urban areas



We know fruit fly populations generally expand in urban areas earlier in the season and then move out to peri-urban and rural sites later in the season.

This trend occurs each year and signifies that fruit fly build up their population in urban areas where temperatures are generally higher, ripe and ripening fruit are more accessible and water is more available via home garden watering, than rural locations at this time of year.

This activity typically leads to incursions into nearby commercial horticultural areas later in the season when their fruit is ripening through until autumn 2023. If urban fruit fly can be managed, then it will benefit commercial production. If you live in a urban or township area and have a fruit tree or veggie patch – fruit fly control is essential.

### The importance of good garden hygiene

Good garden hygiene is essential in controlling the spread of fruit fly and involves picking your fruit as it ripens, collecting and destroying rotting or unwanted host produce on the ground or on the tree, and destroying rotting or unwanted fruit and vegetables.

Harvesting your fruit and vegetables early where possible is a simple and effective way to limit opportunities for infestation.

Don't leave infested fruit on trees or let it drop to the ground, where the maggots can enter the soil and pupate. By keeping your garden free from unwanted fallen and rotten fruit, it is harder for fruit to get a foot hold and breed in your garden.



### Fruit fly control and management

For more information on fruit fly control and management visit [www.fruitflycontrol.com.au](http://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 [gmvfruitfly@moira.vic.gov.au](mailto:gmvfruitfly@moira.vic.gov.au).



**DID YOU KNOW?** The female Queensland fruit fly lay white, banana-shaped eggs inside host fruits and vegetables - one female can lay up to 100 eggs per day.

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