



Media Release

Vigilance required to keep fruit fly numbers low

A community effort is required to stop the spread of Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF), with gardeners reminded now is the time to apply control measures in their home garden.

Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Coordinator Ross Abberfield said vigilance is necessary by those in the community with fruit trees or host plants in their garden.

Weather conditions over recent weeks have been ideal for fruit flies to mature and mate, resulting in the possibility of a fruit fly spike if control measures are not activated and applied diligently.

“While fruit fly typically lay dormant over winter and may be nearing the end of their life cycle, it is important for the community to realise that it is likely they have mated and laid eggs, providing the opportunity for the emergence of a new life cycle,” Mr Abberfield said.

“We are asking the community to assist in reducing the spread of QFF by taking action in their home garden now, despite not being able to see evidence of fruit fly” Mr Abberfield said.

More than 300 fruit fly traps have been distributed across the Goulburn Murray Valley targeting male fruit fly as part of a regional approach to fruit fly management. These traps do not attract female QFF but are used to detect the presence of fruit fly and gauge changes in populations over time.

Traps are checked weekly and have been positioned in various locations across 15 different towns within the region.

“Traps have been deployed in rural and urban areas and will remain in place until March to allow for the identification and analyses of changes in fruit fly numbers,” Mr Abberfield said.

It is recommended that householders use both male-targeting and female-targeting fruit fly traps as a monitoring and control tool in their home garden. Traps can be purchased at hardware, nursery and online suppliers, or can be made in the home.

Householders and gardeners should also use insecticide or bait spray where it is considered appropriate. Other important control measures include the use of netting and ensuring good garden hygiene through early harvesting and destroying rotting or unwanted fruit.

“Unwanted host fruit should not be left on the ground, but instead it should be destroyed by placing it in the freezer or microwave. Alternatively, unwanted fruit can be placed in a sealed plastic bag and left in the sun for 5-7 days to kill any maggots prior to disposal,” Mr Abberfield said.



Once the fruit or vegetables have been treated, the sealed plastic bag can then be placed in the rubbish bin. Untreated, bag free fruit and vegetables must not be placed in your rubbish or green bin, as this may cause a new infestation in another area.

Householders and home gardeners are encouraged to communicate with neighbours to determine whether fruit fly has been detected in their neighbourhood, thus enabling a coordinated approach to the management of QFF.

Commercial growers undertake ongoing measures to prevent fruit fly infestations occurring in their crops. In relation to fallen fruit, growers spray and mulch any fallen fruit on the ground, which destroys its integrity and renders it unsuitable as a host for QFF.

"We are urging the community to help protect the region from fruit fly by undertaking control measures and properly managing any fruit trees they have in their yards or garden," Mr Abberfield said.

Several councils in the Goulburn Murray Valley region have local laws that require the owner and occupier of land in a residential area to manage their fruit trees in a manner that will assist in the prevention of fruit fly infestation.

"Fruit fly is a serious risk to the region's multi-billion dollar horticulture industry, backyard orchards and vegetable gardens. A combined community effort is essential in protecting the Goulburn Murray Valley region," he said.

For more information about the simple steps you can take to reduce the spread of fruit fly, go to www.gmv-qldfruitfly.com.au.

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Caption (from left): Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Coordinator Ross Abberfield, Moira Shire Mayor Libro Mustica, Federal Member for Murray the Hon Damien Drum and Cobram and District Fruit Growers Association President Tony Siciliano came together to support the 'No Flies On Us' message at the recent Cobram and District Fruit Growers Association AGM .

For more information
or media enquiries
contact Kathryn Maddox
M) 0438 548 758