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Fruit Fly on the Increase

By late December 2023, Queensland Fruit Fly (Qfly) populations commenced their annual build up in the Goulburn Murray Valley (GMV). These populations are considerably higher than the same period in December 2022.

Due to recent hail and rain events, numerous fruit and vegetable crops sustained damage such as fruit drop and brown rot, causing growers to instigate mulching and spraying practices to prevent fruit fly infesting damaged fruit and vegetables. Qfly builds up very rapidly in urban and peri-urban sites with a mixture of high amounts of untended fruit, garden irrigation and evergreen refuges, while rural sites shall remain quite low as there is still not much ripe fruit around. Rural sites with high Qfly numbers at this time are likely to have persistent Qfly populations surviving in untended home gardens and untended non-commercial fruit trees on the block. During unfavourable weather conditions, adult Qfly find refuge until more favourable conditions return.

Population reduction can be achieved by increasing active fruit fly management by the community, industry and government to avoid the build-up of fruit fly populations in late summer and autumn 2024.

Trapping Sites of Concern (potential hot spots as of 1st January 2024)

Cobram	Kyabram	Shepparton	Coomboona
Lemnos	Tatura	Grahamvale	Ardmona

Ross Abberfield, Regional Fruit Fly Coordinator was recently invited by the organisers of the Violet Town Community Market to attend their event. The fruit fly information tent complemented the horticultural atmosphere and conveyed the positive message of 'No Flies On Us!' to all those attending and buying produce



True or False

Fruit Flies don't attack grapes.

Up until quite recently it was said that grapes were not a natural host to Qfly. There have been reports of Queensland-grown large-fruited table grapes, such as "White Muscat", being attacked by Qfly but, up until 2007/8 it was unheard of except in some very old Queensland newspaper reports.

In 2007/8 Qfly started to infest table grapes and wine grapes ("Pinot Noir", "Semillon" and "Chardonnay") in the Hunter Valley causing serious damage requiring the implementation of new biosecurity procedures for interstate trade in grapes. At about the same time, Qfly was found to be infesting table grapes in Wagga Wagga.

Reasons for this apparent change in grape's host status to Qfly are considered to be aligned with a population of Qfly that had built up due to unseasonal winter rains based on the presence of feral and other untended host fruit, followed by a lack of suitable host fruit and the presence of ripening grapes. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that growers were unaware that grapes could host Qfly and consequently grapes were not monitored.

Qfly can survive successfully in both wine and table grapes – especially under high population pressure when few alternative and more attractive host fruits are present.

For further information click on this link: <https://youtu.be/ZXhYMRyRTCA?si=xgL0zA5Ibg7Umo2K>

Fruit fly control and management

For more information of 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 5832 5202 or email fruitflycontrol@shepparton.vic.gov.au



Information Packs Available From
Customer Service:

Campaspe Shire Council
Greater Shepparton City Council
Moira Shire
Strathbogie Shire Council
Berrigan Shire Council

GMV REGIONAL FRUIT FLY PROGRAM



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