



Spring into action against fruit fly

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Key Messages:

1. QFF can survive winter so get ready to protect your fruit and vegetables today.
2. Service traps this week and keep an eye out for Queensland fruit fly.
3. Early control will help reduce numbers later in the season.

Ms Jaensch Regional Coordinator Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area is reminding everyone to refresh their monitoring traps at start of spring to see if Queensland Fruit Flies are on the property. “With the days starting to warm up Queensland Fruit Fly are starting to become more active in their search for food.” Ms Jaensch said. “The flies have used up most of their energy reserves over winter and they need to find some protein in a hurry so they can start mating and laying eggs again”.

“We usually see a spring spike in the number of flies in regional monitoring traps around mid-September. If we could kill off all these flies before they had a chance to mate and lay eggs then it would make control a lot easier for everyone later in the season.” She said

Ms Jaensch said “there is still plenty of winter fruit around like mandarins, limes, lemons, olives, avocados and navel oranges”. Ms Jaensch reminds everyone who has a fruit tree to make sure fruit is not left to over-ripen on the tree. “The longer the fruit is on the tree the more chance there is for the fruit to be stung.” She said.

When planning your veggie patch choose plants that don’t host fruit fly. “You can still enjoy home gardening without the disappointment caused by fruit fly if you grow herbs; leafy greens; root vegetables”. Ms Jaensch said.

Insect nets are fast becoming a popular control measure for both fruit and vegetables as it provides a physical barrier. If you have apricots or plum trees that usually ripen at Christmas time, an insect net installed after fruit set, around the end of October will help protect your fruit from fruit fly. Make sure you purchase your nets early from local hardware, agriculture supply stores or online.

Community members are invited to call the GSPFA on 5022 0327 if they would like more information about managing QFF or visit <https://www.pestfreearea.com.au/non-host> to find out which plants do not host fruit fly.

JOBS FOR SPRING

- 1. MONITOR** – refresh monitoring traps and move them to where the flies are – evergreen leafy trees; windbreaks; home gardens; sheds. Check traps weekly and if you find a fly you may need to apply a bait spray.
- 2. CLEAN UP** – dispose of over-ripe winter fruit that is still hanging in the tree – mandarins, limes, lemons, olives, avocados and navel oranges. Regularly pick up fallen fruit and solarize in plastic bags. Clean up your vegetable patch.
- 4. PRUNE** – It’s not too late to prune back fruit trees to less than 2m so you can cover with an insect net. Fruit ripening at Christmas needs to be covered by the end of October.
- 5. GET SMARTER** – remove unwanted fruit trees and replace with trees that don’t produce fruiting bodies. Talk to GSPFA about FREE tree removal to reduce the size of your garden that needs to be managed.