



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Stone fruit growers commended for fruit fly focus

Stone fruit growers have been praised for their attention to Queensland Fruit Fly in what has been a difficult and busy season.

Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area Regional Coordinator Narelle Beattie said most stone fruit growers across the region had been consistent with techniques such as bait spraying to control fruit fly.

“Because of the timing of the stone fruit season, fruit ripens in the summer months when the pests are at their most active, so the industry is one of our most vulnerable,” Ms Beattie said.

“Stone fruit growers have led the way in adopting practices such as monitoring and bait spraying and these techniques are now embedded and part of everyday activity. We are seeing the benefit of that, through very few fruit fly problems this year,” she said.

“Growers had a lot on their plates with labor issues, export uncertainty and marketing problems. It’s a credit to them that they kept up the work on fruit fly right through and we would now just appeal to them to keep up that focus post-season.”

Mid Murray Stone Fruit Growers Association president Michael Tripodi agreed post harvest was a risk period.

“It can be a time when there is a tendency to perhaps relax a little bit, but we all need to keep doing baiting, monitoring and spraying,” Mr Tripodi said.

“As long as there is risk, we need to keep up the effort and hold fruit fly numbers down to get ourselves in the strongest possible position for the start of next season,” he said.

Ms Beattie said strengthening the partnership between growers and urban communities was one of the keys to effective community-wide control.

“To complement what’s happening on our farms, it’s equally important for urban consumers to keep doing the right job in their back yards as well,” Ms Beattie said.

“Managing domestic trees does need ongoing effort, especially at this time of the year. You need to make sure you have plenty of baited traps out and charged, get nets on trees in plenty of time, pick fruit early and often and be really strict on removing fallen fruit,” she said.

“If you aren’t using all the fruit from your trees this summer, then it’s a good time to think about really cutting them back, so they’re easier to manage and you can use all the fruit, or even having them removed,” she said.

To register for free tree removal, and for many more tips to help control Qfly in the garden, contact GSPFA on 03 5022 0327 or visit the website at [www.pestfreearea.com.au](http://www.pestfreearea.com.au).

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