

BEATING FRUIT FLY WITH EXCLUSION NETTING



Kathryn Stevens was over the moon this summer when she picked peaches for the first time in years.

Queensland fruit fly had destroyed all her family's stone fruit over the past few years, so they had all but given up.

"We had stopped watering the fruit trees as much because we thought we didn't have a chance," Kathryn said.

But with the help of Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area field officer Matthew Capp, Kathryn was able to trial an exclusion net to keep fruit fly out and protect her fruit.

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STOP
FRUIT FLY
IT'S UP TO ALL OF US!

Exclusion netting at a glance

- A physical barrier such as an insect net is a good way to protect your fruit from Queensland fruit fly.
- Insect nets can be purchased from local nursery or hardware suppliers or are available online. Ensure nets are made from very fine mesh.
- Cover your trees with nets about six to eight weeks before ripening.
- Fruit flies are only 5–8mm in size, so don't leave any gaps.
- When you have picked all your early ripening fruit, you can pack the net away until next year or transfer it to a tree with a later crop.
- Prune your trees during the dormant period to just under two metres so you can easily cover them with nets and reach all the fruit.



Kathryn said her husband had sprayed a few times, but as they have a young child they didn't want to continue spraying.

"We wanted a way of controlling fruit fly without using chemicals," she said.

"The PFA field officer showed us an insect net and helped put it on our peach tree. We were able to save all the peaches for the first time in years."

Kathryn is now looking forward to next season so she can get even more clean fruit.

"We will absolutely be using the insect net in the future and purchasing another one for our other stone fruit tree," she said.

"We would recommended using the nets to get clean fruit – it saved our fruit."

Kathryn did find that the high winds in the area caused the net to become loose a few times, so it is important to secure the nets well.

If you would like help implementing control strategies in your garden, contact the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area.



If your nets are damaged by the wind or as the tree grows, you can easily repair the holes with nylon thread.