



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Growers urged to control fruit fly on non-commercial fruit trees**

Commercial fruit growers have been urged to take another look around their properties for risks that could potentially derail their hard work on controlling Queensland Fruit Fly so far this season.

Growers have been praised for their attention to Queensland fruit fly in what has been a difficult and busy season already.

Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area Regional Coordinator Narelle Beattie said most growers had been consistent with techniques to control fruit fly on their commercial crops.

“Growers are very experienced now in living with Queensland fruit fly,” Ms Beattie said.

“Over the past five years, they’ve been very proactive in upskilling on how to control fruit fly integrating it into their pest management on farm,” she said.

But with another bad fruit fly year predicted, Ms Beattie urged growers to consider critically again risk areas around their properties.

“With the combination of ideal conditions for fruit fly over autumn and winter, and a La Niña weather event being declared underway, we’re likely to have significant Qfly pressure this season,” she said.

“We are finding that some growers have very robust controls for fruit fly on their crops, but sometimes forget about other fruit trees they might have on their properties.

“Fruit trees around the house, at the back of the shed, or near the pump or pickers’ hut – can easily have sheltered fruit fly from the cold and dry conditions during winter, and fruit on those trees can be infested from spring to autumn, often going unnoticed.

“Unfortunately, when we talk with some growers about fruit fly, sometimes the sole loquat or stone fruit in the house block has slipped their mind – and can be the source of an ongoing problem.”

Ms Beattie said by removing any unwanted non-commercial host trees, growers could not only reduce their own risk and workload but also support their community and neighbours growing stone fruit, citrus, avocados, or table grapes.

“If they don’t want to remove them altogether, the risk can be reduced by putting nets over them, or making sure they’re included in the pest management program for the farm.”

Ms Beattie said in the current high-risk season, urban consumers also had an important role to keep doing the right job in their back yards.

“Managing domestic trees does need ongoing effort, especially at this time of the year,” she said.

“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

More information and tips for growers and backyard gardeners are available on the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area website: [www.pestfreearea.com.au](http://www.pestfreearea.com.au)

There you can also sign up to receive the quarterly grower newsletter to keep up to date with Qfly information tailored to the local area.

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