

MEDIA RELEASE

12 August 2022



Act now to get ahead of fruit fly

Fruit Fly Murray Valley is urging local communities to put their traps out now to reduce Queensland fruit fly numbers and set the region up for a positive season.

FFMV regional coordinator Narelle Beattie said taking action now, as the weather warms up and fruit flies become active again, would give communities the best chance at controlling fruit fly this year.

"Unfortunately, the warm, humid weather we had in autumn meant there were high numbers of flies looking to survive winter," Ms Beattie said.

"Like many of us, they have been waiting for the first rays of spring sunshine to emerge from their hiding places, and they have two things on their mind – to find some food and then look for a mate.

"There are different types of traps to attract male and female flies, so it's good to have a combination of these. And put them out now – don't wait until there's fruit on the tree.

"If we can catch the flies that are looking to breed over the next few weeks, we can stop them before they start new generations."

Ms Beattie said free programs and resources to assist home gardeners were available at Fruit Fly Murray Valley's new website: www.fruitflymv.com.au.

Local residents who want to learn to protect their fruit trees can sign up to the Fruit Fly Fighter Program, while people who can no longer manage their trees can register to have them removed.

Fruit Fly Murray Valley (formerly known as Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area) introduced its new name and branding last month to better represent its objectives and geographical community.

"Queensland fruit fly is unfortunately established in Victoria and is widely distributed across our region," Ms Beattie said.

"The reality is we needed to shift our focus away from an eradication mindset. It is important our community understands that while fruit fly is here to stay, we are capable of living with it.

"Home gardeners who are committed to actively managing fruit fly can also grow and enjoy their own beautiful, clean fruit.

"As long as everyone is aware of what to do and plays their part, we can keep the pressure low and support the valuable horticulture industries in our region to produce quality fruit and vegetables."

The FFMV program is funded by the Victorian Government.

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