

FRUIT FLY MURRAY VALLEY REGIONAL STRATEGY

2021-25 - ACTION PLAN



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The Fruit Fly Murray Valley Strategy 2021-2025 outlines key objectives for the management of established fruit fly and preparedness to the threat of regionally exotic fruit fly over the next four years. The strategy details the vision and goals set by the Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Advisory Group for fruit fly management within the region.

Vision: *Murray Valley horticultural industries are able to effectively manage Queensland fruit fly and area freedom is maintained from exotic fruit fly*

- *These industries will be supported by a wider community (both on and off farm) that is well placed in understanding and implementing effective management actions to minimise the impact of established fruit fly species on the region's horticulture industries, irrespective of the availability of ongoing government support.*
- *Government and industry will have robust preparedness plans in place for any incursions of regionally exotic fruit flies.*
- *Local councils and Agriculture Victoria will support industries through their regulatory roles.*

The strategy has identified five interdependent priority areas and strategic objectives for each area:

1. COOPERATION

Facilitate cooperation on fruit fly management between federal, state and local governments, with stakeholders, industry, growers and community, to ensure state and federal objectives maximise their alignment with the unique characteristics of the region.

2. MANAGEMENT OF ESTABLISHED FRUIT FLY

Coordinate the implementation of an area-wide management program with industry and the community to reduce pest pressure from established fruit fly across the region.

3. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Collaborate with state, national and international research and development organisations to communicate regional needs and facilitate local delivery of research and development outcomes within the community.

4. PREPAREDNESS FOR REGIONALLY EXOTIC FRUIT FLIES

Increase the industry's awareness of the threat of regionally exotic fruit flies to the region and support government and industry to have robust preparedness plans for any incursions.

5. SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

Provide regional context to surveillance activities for regionally exotic and established fruit flies and support regional surveillance capability.

The objectives and outcomes outlined above will be achieved through delivery of the actions and activities documented throughout this action plan. These actions and activities do not have guaranteed funding for delivery. Funding will be sought from the Agriculture Victoria Fruit Fly Strategy 2021-2023 regional coordinator and Area Wide Management Grant Program and other programs.

1. Cooperation

Facilitate cooperation on fruit fly management between federal, state and local governments, with stakeholders, industry, growers and community, to ensure state and federal objectives maximise their alignment with the unique characteristics of the region.

Cooperation between all stakeholders is critical to effectively achieve the regional goals of fruit fly management.

The management of fruit fly to support industry to produce fruit fly-free, clean and marketable fruit and vegetables requires complex interactions between growers, peak industry bodies, federal, state and local governments, the National Fruit Fly Council, local community, researchers, and other key horticulture regions of Victoria.

The Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Advisory Group will facilitate cooperation and links between all stakeholders to enable the effective and efficient implementation of fruit fly management systems, which incorporate the unique regional characteristics of Murray Valley, at a regional, state, and national level. This will be achieved through the delivery of the key objectives and activities outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Key objectives and activities under the cooperation priority area ✓ - Complete activity ✓ - partially complete

Objectives	Key activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Provide an effective mechanism for peak industry bodies, growers, the community, and federal, state and local governments to discuss and cooperate on the management of regionally exotic and established fruit fly	Form, engage and maintain a group of stakeholders (peak industry bodies, growers, the community, and federal, state and local government representatives) to guide, support and provide governance for the implementation of the Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Strategy 2021-2025 (Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Advisory).	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Review and update the advisory group terms of reference.	✓		✓	
	Review program governance.			✓	
	Review and update the Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Strategy 2021-2025.		✓		
	Develop and annually review the regional implementation plan.		✓	✓	✓
	Review and update the four-year action plan (this document) to ensure it continues to reflect the objectives and vision of the advisory group.		✓		
	Develop a forward implementation plan (transition plan).				✓
	Collaborate with other regional organisations and agencies to embed good fruit fly management and awareness into their usual business.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Build strategic relationships with federal and state governments to implement legislative and policy change that supports the program outcomes and fosters information flow.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Objectives	Key activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Provide an avenue for industry, growers and federal and state governments to discuss market access protocol improvements	Coordinate regional grower feedback into market access protocols and instruments for best management and adoption.	✓	✓		
Support cooperation between industry, growers and federal and state governments to make an informed decision relating to the regulator future of the Greater Sunraysia Fruit Fly Area	Maintain peak industry body representation on the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area Regulatory Future Working Group and support facilitation of the outcomes of the group to the advisory group.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support the development of a sustainable fruit fly management model for the region beyond 2025 *The horticulture industry in Victoria has a sustainable funding model that provides for shared contribution to area-wide management of QFF across the three key horticulture regions of Murray Valley, Goulburn Murray, and Yarra Valley (Agriculture Victoria Strategy 2021-2025)	Engage with and support Agriculture Victoria in the development of a sustainable fruit fly management model for the delivery of regional priorities.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop a working group to investigate alternative funding options for regional management of established fruit fly.	✓	✓		
	Investigate governance and funding structures that enable implementation of long-term sustainable programs.	✓	✓		
	Identify elements of area wide management that stakeholders (peak industry bodies, growers, the community, and federal, state and local governments, etc.) are prepared to invest in or support in new ways into the future.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop and implement sustainable funding strategies for Qfly area wide management.			x	
Strengthen the partnership between the Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Advisory and National Fruit Fly Council	Facilitate mechanisms for national fruit fly council representative(s) to provide two-way communication with the advisory group and regional coordinator.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Objectives	Key activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Strengthen partnerships between the Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Advisory and the two key horticulture areas (Goulburn Murray Valley and Yarra Valley) to enhance efficiencies of program delivery	Participate in monthly regional coordinator meetings to facilitate the coordination of strategic planning for future fruit fly management within Victoria and sharing of resources between regions to enable efficient management of fruit fly across the state.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Contribute to the design of the baseline evaluation of Qfly management and impact.	✓			

2. Management of established fruit fly (Queensland fruit fly)

Coordinate the implementation of an area-wide management program with industry and the community to reduce pest pressure from established fruit fly across the region.

Area wide management is a system for managing the fruit fly population in an area so that economic damage from the pest is reduced. Area wide management is the only effective measure to reduce impact from urban areas on production/horticultural areas, through coordinated actions of numerous stakeholders.

The key objectives and associated activities for the implementation of area wide management of Qfly are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Key objectives and activities under the management of established fruit fly (Queensland fruit fly) priority area - ✓ - Complete activity ✓ - partially complete

Objectives	Key activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Increase the adoption of effective management tools to reduce off-farm pressure of fruit fly populations on production areas	Develop, maintain and implement a regional Qfly communication and engagement plan 2021-2025 which adopts systems and mechanisms for the efficient and effective communication of fruit fly information and best management practices.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Support the community to increase their adoption of effective Qfly management methods and tools within residential gardens to reduce off-farm pressure (urban and peri urban).	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop and implement management action plans for habitual hot spots, including defining a habitual hot spot, evaluation, and future recommendations for management.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Deliver the Queensland Fruit Fly Fighter Program to engage with members of the community who are interested and willing to learn how to manage their fruit trees.	✓	✓		
	Assist community members to remove unmanaged Qfly host trees from house yards as a permanent solution to fruit fly infestations.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop links with local schools and assist with delivering education and awareness of Qfly.	✓	✓	✓	

Objectives	Key activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
	Develop and deliver new communication and engagement strategies or methodologies to enhance the adoption of effective management tools to reduce off-farm fruit fly populations by existing audiences.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Create legacy items and programs that won't require ongoing funding to support area wide management.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop and deliver communication and engagement strategies or methodologies to enhance the adoption of effective management tools to reduce off-farm fruit fly populations by new audiences.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop a program for risk assessment of abandoned properties and proposals for the removal of unmanaged commercial trees from sites providing a risk to surrounding properties.	✓	✓		
Facilitate partnerships with local and state governments to convey the responsibilities of land managers for the management of fruit fly, and constructively implement the enforcement of appropriate biosecurity protocols and local laws to suppress established fruit fly pressure	Facilitate partnerships with Swan Hill and Mildura Rural City Councils to promote and facilitate the implementation of compliance measures under local laws regarding control of Qfly across the region. Increase the willingness to intervene with enforcement of bylaws for the management of backyard trees where awareness raising, education and support with management have not proved effective.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Facilitate partnerships with Gannawarra Shire Council to promote and facilitate the implementation of Qfly management measures within the community.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Facilitate partnership with Agriculture Victoria Biosecurity to increase, promote and facilitate the enforcement of biosecurity legislation for commercial properties not being managed for fruit fly.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Deliver training for local council customer service representatives and civic compliance officers on the behaviour and management of Qfly to aid in communication to the public about fruit fly management.			✓	✓
	Contribute to land-use and local planning guidelines to avoid increasing future Qfly pressure. Review local planning strategies to consider planting non-host varieties on roadside and other shared community areas.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facilitate the development and implementation of specific action plans	Identify sub-regions of Fruit Fly Murray Valley for the development and implementation of specific sub-regional action plans for the management of established fruit fly.	✓	✓	✓	

Objectives	Key activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
for sub regions of the Fruit Fly Murray Valley area where Qfly impact on agricultural properties is high and influenced by specific community dynamics	Investigate alternative funding options for the implementation of sub-regional plans.		✓	✓	
Collaborate with industry to identify and promote best practice and controls for established fruit fly on farm that are based on current and emerging research and consistent with domestic and export protocol requirements	Build capacity across industry to improve Qfly management on-farm, encourage growers to share and learn from each other, bring in knowledge owners and experts from other regions and create legacy items and programs that won't require ongoing funding support.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue to engage with local growers through peak industry bodies and local service providers to identify and promote best practice and controls for established fruit fly on farm.	✓	✓	✓	✓

3. Research and development

Collaborate with state, national and international research and development organisations to communicate regional needs and facilitate local delivery of research and development outcomes within the community.

Research and development provide practical strategies and innovative solutions for the management of fruit fly. The national fruit fly strategy outlines the objective to “maintain and enhance fruit fly research capability, capacity and resources, pursuing research and extension that focuses on nationally agreed priorities”.

The key objectives and associated activities to provide links between regional needs and research and development are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Key objectives and activities under the research and development priority area ✓ - Complete activity
✓ - partially complete

Objectives	Activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
3.1 - Foster strong partnerships with scientific and technical experts and research and development agencies to facilitate the delivery of research and development within the Fruit Fly Murray Valley area	Facilitate connections between research organisations, innovators and growers to encourage trials of alternative control (e.g., parasitoidis) and application methods under local conditions.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Assist with on-farm investigations for research and development trials and provide a feedback loop between parties to improve the adaptive capacity of technologies and practices under local conditions.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Review existing sterile insect technology control trials.		✓		

Objectives	Activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
3.2 - Facilitate the extension and sharing of new research and development outcomes at a local level with end users	Undertake environmental scanning of potential new technologies and approaches that could be tested locally, on-farm.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop a new technology assessment and implementation plan.		✓		
	Contribute to scientific forums and tours to compare and provide regional Qfly context and build-on local experience.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Evaluate new technologies implemented to inform future uptake.				✓
3.3 - Establish partnerships with research and development funders to funnel regional perspectives on current and future gaps and needs of end users within the Fruit Fly Murray Valley area	Identify local Qfly knowledge gaps and assist with developing funding applications to address local research priorities and cross-sector benefits.	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.4 - Support modelling of established fruit fly species' population dynamics to assist industry application of effective and efficient management options	Undertake investigations to better understand local fruit fly populations, highest risk areas and the management efficiency.		✓	✓	✓

4. Preparedness for regionally exotic fruit flies

Increase the industry's awareness of the threat of regionally exotic fruit flies to the region and support government and industry to have robust preparedness plans for any incursions.

Federal and state governments are responsible for the prevention, preparedness and response to exotic fruit flies.

Under the strategy, the Fruit Fly Murray Valley Advisory Group aims to complement both state and national objectives by increasing the industry's awareness of the threat from regionally exotic fruit flies and supporting government and industry to have robust preparedness plans for any incursions.

The key objectives and associated activities to ensure preparedness for the threat of regionally exotic fruit flies are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4: Key objectives and activities under the preparedness to the threat of regionally exotic fruit flies priority area ✓ - Complete activity ✓ - partially complete

Objectives	Activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Increase the region's awareness of and preparedness to the threat from fruit flies exotic to the region	Enhance biosecurity awareness in commercial and urban environments to facilitate increased reporting of suspect exotic fruit fly.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facilitate a mechanism for local industries, growers and community to provide regional context in the Agriculture Victoria-agreed response strategy for fruit flies exotic to the region	Support Biosecurity Victoria and New South Wales Department of Primary Industries to develop a comprehensive preparedness plan for a MedFly outbreak.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support industry to have mechanisms that will enable business continuity in the face of regionally exotic fruit fly outbreaks	Support NFFC and peak industry bodies to have mechanisms that will enable business continuity in the face of regionally exotic fruit fly outbreaks.		✓	✓	✓

5. Surveillance and monitoring

Provide regional context to surveillance activities for established fruit flies and those exotic to the region and support regional surveillance capability.

Surveillance and monitoring systems provide valuable information for understanding pest pressure in an area, allowing early detection of exotic species and facilitating targeted on-ground response to established species.

The key objectives and associated activities to provide regional context to surveillance activities and support regional surveillance capability are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Key objectives and activities under the surveillance and monitoring priority area ✓ - Complete activity ✓ - partially complete x - not complete

Objectives	Activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
5.1 - Facilitate the dissemination of new surveillance tools available for established fruit fly on-farm or for industry and community needs	Trial new surveillance technologies and methods that minimise ongoing maintenance, are more targeted or provide automated data.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Objectives	Activities	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
5.2 - Ensure the effective implementation of a targeted area-wide management program by supporting a monitoring network for established fruit fly and providing data on the pest pressure and population distribution across the Fruit Fly Murray Valley area	Utilise current and historical fruit fly catch data to implement targeted area-wide management (e.g., identification of current and habitual hotspots and development of sub-regional plans). Note: The surveillance grid is maintained by Agriculture Victoria across the GSPFA capturing and reporting fortnightly fly catch data*	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Utilise current and historic fruit fly catch data from the Agriculture Victoria surveillance grid to evaluate program delivery and determine correlation between program activities and Qfly population.	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.3 - Collaborate with state government to provide the regional context of surveillance needs for early detection of fruit flies exotic to the region	Collaborate with Agriculture Victoria on any review of surveillance needs for established species.	x	x	✓	✓
	Collaborate with Agriculture Victoria on any review of surveillance needs for regionally exotic species.	x	x	✓	✓
5.4 - Support regional surveillance capability and identify ways to capture data from growers and community to support this capability.	Investigate mechanisms for collection of regional data (e.g., AUSpestCheck™).			✓	✓

* Agriculture Victoria has acknowledged through the Victoria's Fruit Fly strategy 2021-2025 Grant Guidelines that surveillance is provided to Murray Valley region by the Department. Any change to trapping while the grant is in progress will be discussed with project leaders. When developing this action plan and applying for grant funding, an assumption has therefore been made that there will be no change in the current surveillance grid.

6. Program management

In addition to the strategy's priority areas, the following objectives and activities have been identified to ensure the implementation of efficient and effective business systems.

Objectives	Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
Maintaining organisational resources and staff capacity – meeting legal requirements and reporting obligations	Meet reporting requirements of grant funding from Agriculture Victoria including output reporting, annual impact assessments and audited financial reports.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide adequate and job-specific training opportunities to improve staff capability.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Maintain financial management and reporting framework to meet investor requirements.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Maintain adequate administration support to facilitate program delivery.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Maintain a register of all staff training and qualifications including first aid, chemical handling and working with children checks.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Build risk management framework mindset into project planning and delivery.	✓	✓	✓	✓