

MEDIA RELEASE

15 November 2022



Beat fruit fly to your garden this year

Fruit Fly Murray Valley is urging the community to consider the damaging impact of fruit fly when planting their vegetable gardens this year – before it's too late to save their produce.

The organisation last year received an increased number of requests for help from home gardeners whose tomatoes and other fruiting vegetables were ruined by Queensland fruit fly.

"We don't want to see the same thing happen to people again this year," FFMV regional coordinator Narelle Beattie said.

"Once Qfly has laid eggs in your fruit, the damage has been done, and the only thing you can do is remove and dispose of it all.

"The easiest way to avoid dealing with fruit fly this season is to plant vegetables that are not hosts for Qfly. These include leafy greens, roots and bulbs, stems and pods, tough-skinned varieties, and herbs and spices."

Ms Beattie said people should invest in insect exclusion netting for their garden beds if they still wanted to grow fruiting vegetables like tomatoes, capsicums, chillies and eggplants, which are prone to Qfly infestation.

"Be prepared and have nets ready to cover your plants to ensure Queensland fruit flies don't enjoy your fruit and vegetables more than you do," she said.

"The best time to net your plants will vary depending on the variety, but remember that fruit flies will lay eggs into green fruit, so don't let it get too big.

"Something else to keep in mind is that nets will also exclude beneficial insects, such as bees, and may reduce wind pollination.

"If you have any self-pollinating varieties and are keen to increase the amount of fruit, try gently shaking the flowers like the wind would do if the plants were not netted. Another technique to improve pollination is to gently brush the flowers with a finger or small paintbrush."

For more information and resources to help you control fruit fly visit fruitflymv.com.au.

Media contact

Narelle Beattie, Fruit Fly Murray Valley Regional Coordinator

0438 335 661

Narelle.Beattie@mildura.vic.gov.au