



MEDIA RELEASE

15 June 2022

Community urged to mobilise to manage fruit fly issues

Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area is urging local communities to mobilise over the cooler months to get on top of Queensland Fruit Fly issues that caused problems over the fruit growing season.

GSPFA Regional Coordinator Narelle Beattie said while fruit fly had been an issue for growers in several local communities, there was a message for the entire Greater Sunraysia region, from Mildura to Kerang.

“These colder months are an opportunity for us to get on top of fruit fly – the work we do now will be springboard to set ourselves up for success in spring and summer,” Ms Beattie said.

“Queensland Fruit Fly is here to stay, and whether you are a commercial fruit or vegetable producer, have a small market garden or orchard, or simply have fruit trees around your home, we all have a role to play,” she said.

“Unmanaged fruit trees, wherever they are, are havens for fruit fly and increasing fruit fly numbers are just one more thing that makes it harder for growers to produce clean, marketable fruit.”

This season’s high numbers caused crop losses, pushed up production costs and forced producers to apply higher levels of chemical control, Ms Beattie said.

“Reducing fruit fly numbers is crucial for the wellbeing of local horticulturists but a healthy horticultural sector benefits everyone in the local community through jobs and economic activity,” she said.

“If fruit fly is left for full-time farmers to manage, it is not only very expensive and time consuming but much harder to control.”

Fruit fly host plants include, but are not limited to stone, pome and citrus fruit trees, grapevines, olives, loquats and pomegranates trees, prickly pear and boxthorn and the GSPFA recommends the removal of any fruit trees that are not being managed for fruit fly.

“It is important they are removed from both backyard gardens and commercial orchards or vineyards that have been taken out of active production.

“If fruit trees are staying, then ensuring they are managed properly throughout the entire year is crucial. That means removal of any fruit that’s still on the trees or vines after harvest, cleaning up fallen fruit and possibly applying bait or cover spraying during the season.

Ms Beattie said GSPA can remove backyard fruit trees from residential properties free of charge if required and information on fruit fly management was readily available on the GSPFA website.

“If you would like advice and information on how to manage your fruit trees, our local fruit fly Community Support Officers are happy to talk to you or visit if you need it. Agronomists and chemical resellers are also a great source of advice on the right approach for your property,” she said.

Please contact the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area office on (03) 5022 0327 or email gspfa@mildura.vic.gov.au to discuss your options.

For information and advice about controlling Queensland fruit fly in your garden, visit the GSPFA website: www.pestfreearea.com.au

Media contact:

Narelle Beattie, GSPFA Regional Coordinator
0438 335 661