



Grower's Column

A spring overview

- Trapping data indicates that the usual spring peak in fruit fly numbers has occurred in the Goulburn Murray Valley (GMV).
- About 88 per cent of the GMV's QFF population is currently located in urban sites.
- Only 12 per cent of QFF have been found in rural locations of the GMV.
- Weather conditions are now suitable for QFF to mate and lay eggs.
- Over the next few weeks ripening fruit will be susceptible to infestations.
- 80 new trap sites were set up in 2018/19 to add to the 314 traps deployed two years ago. Many of these new sites are registering high QFF numbers.
- Aerial releases of about 2.5 million sterile QFF per week commenced on 10 September 2019, as part of a pilot SITplus project, over a defined "drop-zone" of the township of Cobram.

As QFF populations are currently being trapped in urban areas, farmers and commercial orchardists whose properties are situated in peri-urban locations are encouraged to act now against pest fruit flies to protect their future crops and commercial crops in the area.

CONTROL STRATEGIES

Be ready to take action

If you are a farmer or orchardist on the peri-urban fringe of an urban area that had a fruit fly problem last year that was not controlled, it is likely that QFF will be present again this season.

Monitoring is critical

Monitoring for QFF presence uses traps and eyesight as the weapons of choice. Most traps catch male QFF, but some will catch females. You can also monitor by checking ripening fruit for fruit fly sting marks. Keep an eye out for fruiting plants on roadsides, channel banks, Council and Crown land, untended properties and business sites. You may have to talk with your Council or your local Fruit Fly Coordinator to let them know about any sightings of fruit fly host plants.

Baiting

Baiting attracts and kills with food-based attractants and toxicants and is currently the optimal QFF control strategy for orchards. Baiting is time-consuming but, if done correctly, is very effective. There are several commercial products available for this strategy. See your produce store for advice. Baiting works best in orchards when applied weekly (and more often after rain).

Pesticides

Pesticides with Federal Government approval for use in orchards are available. If you've run out of supplies you should order more as soon as you can, particularly if fruit flies were a problem last season.

For more information

For more information on QFF control, collect an information pack from your Council's Customer Service Centre or visit www.gmv-qldfruitfly.com.au

The GMV Regional Fruit Fly Project is funded by the Victorian Government's Managing Fruit Fly Regional Grants Program