

BRIEF PROVIDED FOR PIAPH 16

Executive Summary

National Fruit Fly Strategy

The National Fruit Fly Strategy (NFFS) will commence implementation in the 2008/09 financial year. The NFFS aims to develop a viable, cost-effective and sustainable national approach to fruit fly management, with commitment from all stakeholders. The NFFS is coordinated by Plant Health Australia and priorities are to be determined by a national Implementation Committee which will commence work in July 2008.

Management of fruit fly free areas

Current fruit fly outbreaks in Victoria have not impacted on international market access as they have occurred outside the areas accepted by our trading partners as fruit fly free. These outbreaks are managed by the Victorian Department of Primary Industries under the Queensland Fruit Fly Code of Practice. The Code describes actions to respond to outbreaks and conditions under which fruit fly freedom can be reinstated.

Key Issues

National Fruit Fly Strategy

- The NFFS has been designed to address the escalating efforts and resources required to effectively respond to the significant impact of fruit fly on the industry, the community, and on interstate and international trade.
- Key elements of the NFFS are:
 - Optimising early detection and response to minimise the impact of fruit flies.
 - Managing fruit flies by effective and efficient use of tools, technology and people to define, maintain or modify the fruit fly status of an area to support trade and production.
 - Raising awareness of biosecurity generally and fruit fly specifically, including in communities that are impacted by the pest.
 - Establishing and maintaining an intelligence network that imparts information to target risks and threats and supports the risk analysis process.

Management of fruit fly free areas

- States and territories have the responsibility and the necessary legislation for managing fruit fly area free zones.
- Current outbreaks in Victoria do not affect the international status of Victoria's fruit fly area free zones.

Background

Queensland Fruit Fly (Qfly) is an Australian native fruit fly that is widespread throughout Queensland and northern and coastal areas of New South Wales therefore eradication is not possible.

National Fruit Fly Strategy

The draft NFFS has been under development by Plant Health Australia on behalf of governments and industry since early 2007. It is intended that the final strategy will be presented to Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) in late 2008 for endorsement. The NFFS was developed through input from the Australian Government, the state and territory governments, horticultural industries and research and development organisations.

Management of fruit fly free areas

Protected areas, known as Qfly free areas, have been established in areas where Qfly does not occur naturally. This includes all of Tasmania, Western Australia and South Australia, and the Riverina and Sunraysia irrigated production areas along the Murray River. The fruit production areas along the Murray River are also protected by a large fruit fly exclusion zone. The existing fruit fly free areas are managed by state governments under various conditions which include trapping grids and regular monitoring, as well as regulating entry of fruit fly host material to free areas under state plant health legislation. Internationally these conditions are determined by bilateral negotiations with trading partners and are consistent wherever possible with specifications documented within the Queensland Fruit Fly Code of Practice (Qfly COP). They delimit the free area, validate freedom and protect it from natural or human-assisted infestation.

Trading partners recognise that Qfly outbreaks may occur from time to time and these are dealt with under the pre-agreed containment and eradication processes contained in international market access agreements and the Qfly COP. States and territories have the responsibility as well as the legislation to contain and/or eradicate these outbreaks.

An outbreak is triggered by the number of fruit flies caught in a trapping grid over time, for example 5 male fruit flies caught in traps less than 1km apart within a fortnight, or finds of fruit fly larvae. The triggers vary between trading partners. There are currently 36 Queensland Fruit Fly outbreaks in Victoria. These are not in the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area that is accepted by our trading partners and are impacting only on host fruit and vegetables that are traded into Qfly free areas of Australia.

Fruit from infested areas, including those that have lost fruit fly free status, may require a treatment to prevent viable fruit flies entering free areas. Treatments vary with host and legislation and may include cold treatments, insecticide sprays or heat treatment. Additional treatment incurs additional cost to the grower and trader.

Causes of outbreaks are diverse and can be due to a number of factors. These may include:

- . Higher winter temperatures that allow fruit fly to survive into spring
- . Changes in management practices by both industry and government
- . Movement of infested commercial or home grown fruit.