

# THE NATIONAL FRUIT FLY STRATEGY



## WHY DO WE NEED A NATIONAL STRATEGY?

Australia's horticultural production is valued at over \$9 billion and employs approximately 60,000 people. A large proportion of that production is, however, under threat from two species of fruit fly: Mediterranean fruit fly which occurs only in parts of Western Australia, and Queensland fruit fly that occurs in the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Considerable costs are involved in controlling these two species, including a variety of in-field controls and post-harvest treatments.

As fruit flies can attack a wide range of host plants across many regions in Australia, a problem in one crop can easily affect other crops in the region and so a coordinated approach to managing these pests is paramount.

With ongoing changes to market access conditions, the availability of various chemical controls, and seasonal pressures, there is also a need for a fruit fly management system that is robust and adaptable to future changes.

The National Fruit Fly Strategy (NFFS) is an initiative to improve the way Australia manages fruit flies, the world's most economically significant horticultural pests. Development of the strategy was led by Plant Health Australia and involved governments, industries, and researchers.

The goal of the NFFS is for Australia have a viable, cost-effective and sustainable approach to fruit fly management and ensure that fruit flies are not a constraint to sustainable production or a significant barrier to market access.

## WHAT DOES THE NFFS SEEK TO ACHIEVE?

The objectives of the NFFS are to:

- Reduce the risk of fruit fly incursions from overseas and the spread of fruit flies within Australia.
- To optimise early detection and response to exotic fruit flies.
- To manage endemic fruit flies through effective and efficient use of tools, technology and people to support trade and sustainable production.
- To raise awareness of the importance of biosecurity and specifically fruit flies and to encourage growers, industries, governments and the community to work collaboratively.
- To develop an intelligence network that will allow fruit fly risks to be identified, targeted and managed.

## IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The NFFS, released in November 2008, included 20 recommendations covering the areas of market access and biosecurity, operations, legislation and regulation, and research and development. This was supported by the 2010 NFFS Implementation Action Plan which detailed specific projects for enhancing fruit fly management, how these activities would benefit points along the production chain, and which was the basis for prioritising investments.

The National Fruit Fly Council has been established to oversee implementation of the NFFS and continues the work begun by the National Fruit Fly Strategy Advisory Committee who performed this role from May 2014 to September 2015. The Council includes representatives from governments, industry and research funding agencies.

## THREE KEY AREAS OF ACTIVITY

### 1. Engagement with communities, industries and other stakeholders

Plants grown in backyards, urban areas, or growing wild along roadsides can be a refuge for fruit flies, or provide an alternative breeding site. As a result, it is important that fruit flies in these environments are also managed to prevent pest populations building up in these areas before moving into commercial production or affecting home grown produce.

An important part of the NFFS is to ensure that there is a national approach to communicating the importance of fruit fly management and to encourage a collaborative approach. Collation and dissemination of information on how to manage fruit flies in various environments is also important.

**PreventFruitFly.com.au**, a new website set up by PHA for the National Fruit Fly Council, has been published to collect fruit fly management information and to assist all stakeholders and interested parties find information relevant to their situation.

### 2. Strengthening research and development

Improvements in fruit fly management are delivered through applied and strategic research. State governments, industry groups and researchers such as universities and the CSIRO have invested heavily in fruit fly management over many years.

The NFFS aims to ensure that fruit fly RD&E is coordinated nationally, to make the most of limited research dollars and avoid duplication. Through the development of an Action Plan and consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders, the National Fruit Fly Council will seek to clarify the priority of fruit fly related R&D and track progress on research efforts.

### 3. Pathways for market access

The goal of horticultural production is to find commercial markets for fruit and vegetables. However, the nature of fruit flies means that market access conditions are often rigorous and potential expensive to meet. The NFFS seeks to maximise access to markets, through promoting research into treatment options and policies that open domestic and international trade opportunities, while ensuring that fruit flies are not incidentally spread.

For further information on the NFFS contact the PHA office on 02 6215 7700 or email [fruitfly@phau.com.au](mailto:fruitfly@phau.com.au). Full details on the NFFS, the Implementation Action Plan and the National Fruit Fly Council can be obtained at [preventfruitfly.com.au](http://preventfruitfly.com.au). If you suspect an exotic fruit fly or other new plant pest, report it immediately to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

