



MEDIA RELEASE

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Fruit fly program reaches milestone

Sunraysia's fruit fly management program has hit a new milestone, with more than 7000 host trees removed from home and community gardens across the region.

Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area's free tree removal program has been successful in helping residents who have struggled to manage their trees for Queensland fruit fly (QFF) since the initiative launched almost four years ago.

The 7000th tree – a very large white mulberry tree – was recently removed from Ann Grivec's property in Mildura.

While Ms Grivec loved the tree, it had become a big problem and she was unable to manage it.

"The tree grew and grew in the 20 years since I bought my house, but it didn't start producing fruit until about five years ago – and then the mulberries started to drop in the thousands," she said.

"I had to put tarps down on the ground to try and catch them because they were three or four inches thick, and the tree was so loaded I had to watch where I put my washing because the branches were right over the clothesline."

When Ms Grivec spotted QFF larvae in the fruit, she knew it had to come down.

"My next door neighbour had three of her trees cut down because there was fruit fly in them, so she suggested I call to have mine removed for free as well," she said.

"I'm a real garden lover and don't like cutting trees down, but the mulberries were a lot of work – and it's good to know I'm part of helping with the fruit fly issue."

GSPFA regional coordinator Narelle Beattie said it was great to see that word about the tree removal program was spreading within the community.

"The program is really helping to reduce fruit fly activity in the region and it removes the worry and hassle for residents who don't want to manage their trees," Ms Beattie said.

"Now is the time for people to take advantage of the program. Victorian residents living between Yelta and Kerang – either in town or on a residential block in rural areas – can have their fruit trees removed at no cost by professional arborists."

The work is funded by the Victorian Government's Managing Fruit Fly Regional Grant Program.

For more information or to register for free tree removal, visit www.pestfreearea.com.au or contact GSPFA on (03) 5022 0327. Conditions apply.