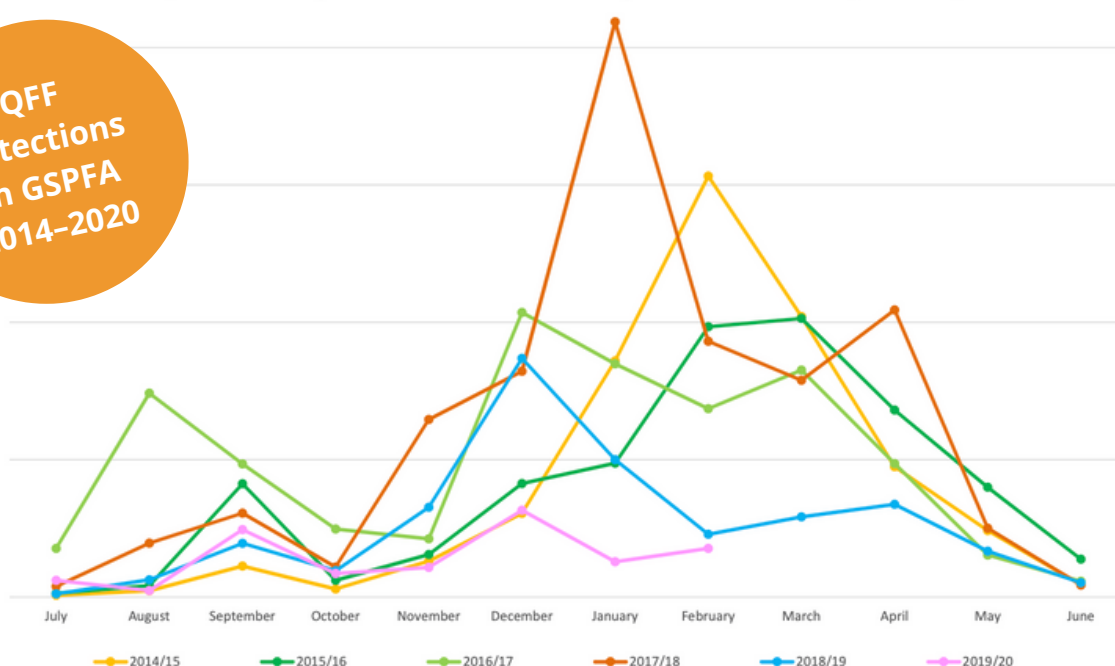




# QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 • MARCH 2020

QFF  
detections  
in GSPFA  
2014-2020



## Lowest number of QFF trapped in five years

*The Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area (GSPFA) has recorded its lowest number of trapped Queensland fruit flies since before the major outbreak of 2014/15.*

The decline has occurred in all areas of the GSPFA monitored with Agriculture Victoria's 1150 surveillance traps. It is especially evident from the first two weeks of November 2019 to February 2020.

QFF activity in the GSPFA, as measured by the average number of fruit flies per trap, follows a seasonal pattern.

Fruit fly season begins in late August, when the days start to warm and surviving adult flies become more active, and it continues until the end of April when the days begin to cool.

Low numbers are trapped during the winter, then a small peak occurs in late spring coinciding with the emergence of adults from their winter refuges.

Trap capture rates decline from October to November as overwintering adults die out, leaving eggs and larvae in fruit and pupae in the ground to emerge in multiple population explosions as adults in summer and autumn.

## Don't forget your trial varieties & pollinators

*It is important to manage all trees on your property for fruit fly – not just the ones you harvest for sale.*

Don't forget about trial and old varieties, pollinators, and trees in your yard, paddock, around the pump, or along channel banks.

All your efforts in the orchard, grove or vineyard could be jeopardised by not managing these trees.

If you don't want them, or if it's too much trouble looking after them, think about pulling them out or chopping them down.

Please remove any remaining fruit and, if possible, rake fallen fruit from under the trees out into the space between the rows and run over with a slasher or similar. This breaks up the fruit and exposes fruit fly eggs and larvae to desiccation and predation.

Raking fruit into piles is not an ideal control method as QFF will survive in the fruit and pupate in the pile and the soil underneath.

Some pesticide applications are approved for use on fallen fruit and late-hanging fruit as an after-harvest clean-up. See the [Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority website](#) or your local chemical supplier for advice.

But remember, there are restrictions on how soon you or stock can re-enter an orchard treated in this way.

If you can ensure there is no residual fruit left after harvest, the number of fruit flies moving on to the next crop is reduced considerably.

You do not want to give adult flies a chance to survive over winter and be responsible for starting next season's fruit fly problems.



## Your autumn checklist

*It is a risk to assume that absence of QFF in a particular area last season means that it won't attract QFF this season. Monitoring prior to fruit ripening is therefore essential.*

Dispersal of adult QFF depends greatly on weather conditions, wind strength and direction, host fruit availability, time of year, and maturity of the insect. Such conditions cause a great deal of variability in their potential lifetime flight distance. QFF eggs and larvae can obviously travel hundreds of kilometres in infested fruit.

If you had fruit fly problems last year then you will most likely have them again this year if you do not carry out suitable fruit fly mitigation strategies.

This season, ensure you:

- Use traps to check for the presence of QFF
- Visually check ripening fruit for sting marks or presence of larvae
- If you have QFF in your traps or fruit, consider using fruit fly baits or pesticides (both under strict adherence to approved labels)
- Remove QFF temptation – get rid of fruit and whole plants/trees you don't want
- Take care of fruit coming onto your property as it may already be infested
- Talk to your neighbours (whether in urban or rural locations) to prepare for potential QFF incursions.

## Working together to protect our crops

*Working together is the key to reducing QFF populations across the region, according to Sunraysia growers.*

Stone fruit growers Michael Tripodi and Paul Mobilio (pictured) said fruit fly could be managed using the right control strategies, but it was important that all growers were doing something.

"We need to work as a community, and as a collective of growers, to make sure we're doing the best job we can to control fruit fly on our properties, and to let each other know if there's something new to be aware of," Michael said.

"We have to be more caring about each other, because if a couple of us aren't doing the right thing then that's all it needs for an outbreak – and then of course it spreads and it's a lot harder to control."

See the case study on the [GSPFA website](#) for more about how Michael and Paul control fruit fly on their properties.



### Building a strong national fruit fly system

The GSPFA governance group recently met with National Fruit Fly Council manager Christina Cook to discuss strategies for coordinated fruit fly management.

The [National Fruit Fly Council](#) brings together governments, growers and research funders to drive the delivery of a cost-effective and sustainable approach to managing fruit flies across Australia.

The council is currently developing a National Fruit Fly Strategy for 2020–2025, which will be circulated to peak industry bodies and regional grower groups for comment in the near future.

### New trapping strategy to be tested on grapes

Agriculture Victoria scientists are set to trial a new "attract-and-kill" trapping strategy in a bid to help growers manage QFF in table grapes.

The two-year project, funded by Agriculture Victoria and Hort Innovation, builds on current research that has developed a trap targeting mating females and is showing promise in stone fruit, pome fruit and citrus orchards. The trap looks and smells like ripe fruit, tricking the female flies into landing on a sticky surface.

Read the full media release at [agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au).

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