



July 2015

What a gall!

From now until mid-spring is the time to check your citrus trees for signs of citrus gall wasp (*Bruchophagus fellis*).

A pest of the Australian finger lime, this native insect from the eastern states was first detected in WA in 2013, though it's probable the wasp has been present for longer than two years. Citrus gall wasp is believed to have been introduced into the state via infected nursery stock. It is currently known to be present in the Perth suburbs of Lockridge, Beechboro, Morley, Kiara, Embleton, Bayswater, Caversham and Eden Hill. Preventing the spread of this citrus pest is important, if it establishes in commercial orchards it would be difficult and costly to control and potentially increasing fruit prices.

Citrus gall wasps infest young stem material on citrus trees causing distinctive woody galls to form which protect the developing larvae. These galls are at their largest and most visible from June to September and tend to be most abundant in the lower canopy. Infestations on citrus trees can cause reduced leaf production and decrease fruit yield. In severe cases the trees may suffer dieback. Lemon and grapefruit trees and new growth from citrus rootstocks are most susceptible.



Fresh gall on citrus tree caused by citrus gall wasp larvae

There is only one generation per year. The adult wasp emerges from the gall from September to December so control should be carried out by August to prevent adults emerging and breeding. Female wasps start laying eggs immediately which hatch in 2-4 weeks.



Portion of gall cut open to show the numerous chambers in which wasps develop

If you have noticed galls forming on your citrus trees we would like to hear from you, especially if you are located outside the known infestation areas. You can control citrus gall wasp by pruning branches and rootstock suckers bearing galls, then mulch, chop or burn the material to prevent re-infestation. To confirm your identification or report citrus gall wasp, please send clear photos of the galls with your name, address and contact information to info@agric.wa.gov.au or call the Pest and Disease Information Service on 1800 084 881. For more information about citrus gall wasps see our website <https://agric.wa.gov.au/n/1175>.