



Department of
Agriculture and Food



Backyard Buddies

Your monthly guide to animal and plant pests, diseases and weeds

Backyard Buddies – April 2015

Title: Holiday travel and a hidden pest

Queensland fruit fly.



Mediterranean fruit fly.



Whether they are grown by commercial producers or by home gardeners, many food plants are vulnerable to attack. A fruit fly from eastern Australia has not become established here yet, although individual specimens have been found several times. If family or friends are visiting from interstate, please make them aware that fruit and vegetables should be left at home or dropped into the quarantine bins at the airport or interstate check points.

Fruit and vegetable's worst Enemy

With the exception of pineapple, every other kind of fruit and many vegetables are hosts of Queensland fruit fly (*Bactrocera tryoni*), which has spread far beyond its home state to invade New South Wales, Victoria and some Pacific islands. If fruit is unprotected the destruction can be 100%, so growers and gardeners in affected areas have to strive to control the flies by using a combination of fruit bagging, spray baiting, mass trapping and orchard hygiene.

How it spreads

Queensland fruit fly maggots are carried inside fruit and vegetables. Quarantine Western Australia (QWA) examines all consignments of fresh produce coming from interstate, to check for the presence of Queensland fruit fly and other pests. QWA also has regulations to deter private travellers carrying fruit and vegetables when they enter from interstate by road, rail or air. All fresh produce must be binned upon arrival at State borders.

The Queensland fruit fly is slightly bigger than the Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly, *Ceratitis capitata*) with which many of us are all too familiar. But a distinct difference in colouring is the best means of identification. The thorax is reddish brown with two yellow “shoulder patches”, the abdomen is dark brown and the wings are clear, unlike Medfly which is light brown in colour, with irregular patches of black and silver and wings with brown bands. Most fruit fly activity and damage occurs between November and May, although they may be seen in cooler months.

Control

As mentioned in January’s edition of Backyard Buddies, methods to combat Medfly can be found on our website agric.wa.gov.au, search ‘Mediterranean fruit fly’. If you suspect you’ve seen Qfly please contact the Pest and Disease Information Service on 1800 084 881 or email a photo to info@agric.wa.gov.au.