



The Place To Be

Media release

From the Minister for Agriculture

Thursday, 10 September, 2009

FRUIT FLY SEASON ON THE HORIZON IN NORTHERN VICTORIA

The Brumby Government is reminding residents in northern Victoria that they can play a major role in controlling Queensland fruit fly this spring and summer.

Agriculture Minister Joe Helper said with the imminent arrival of warmer spring days Queensland fruit fly would soon become active again in northern Victoria.

“The Brumby Labor Government is taking action to assist Victoria’s communities in the fight against fruit fly and last financial year alone we invested \$3.5 million to inspect more than 25,000 properties across Victoria to limit its potentially devastating impact,” Mr Helper said.

“But with the warmer weather comes the warning that fruit flies will soon emerge from shelter to look for food and for fruit in which to lay eggs.

“Queensland fruit flies prefer ripe or nearly ripe fruit to lay their eggs in and citrus is the main target for fruit flies at this time of year, particularly old ripe fruit from last season.”

Mr Helper said the general public could play a major role in controlling this pest by disposing of old and fallen fruit in home gardens, harvesting and consuming fruit as soon as it ripens, and leaving no ripe fruit on trees.

“These are all practices which deprive fruit fly of sites to lay their eggs and if widely followed will help to keep fruit fly numbers low during the season,” he said.

To kill any fruit fly eggs or maggots in the fruit prior to disposal in the rubbish bin, unwanted fruit can be stewed, frozen for two days, or placed in a sealed plastic bag and left in the sun for several days.

Home-grown fruit should not be moved from the property unless it has been cooked.

With school holidays fast approaching, Mr Helper reminded travellers not to take fruit with them into the Fruit Fly Exclusion Zone (FFEZ) or the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area within the FFEZ.

“Fruit should be consumed before entering these zones, or placed in the roadside bins provided,” he said.

“Random roadblocks may be operating in some areas and substantial fines can apply if uncertified host produce is taken into an exclusion zone.”

Further information is available from the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or the DPI website at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/psb