

Tuesday 4 March, 2008

QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY OUTBREAK AT YACKANDANDAH

An outbreak of Queensland fruit fly has been detected at Yackandandah in Victoria's north-east.

Bill Ashcroft, Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Plant Standards Program Manager, said a control area (1.5 km radius) had been established around the affected site and DPI will commence a pest control program within the area.

Mr Ashcroft said although Yackandandah is not located within the fruit fly exclusion zone, there is commercial fruit production nearby so it is important that the pest is controlled to prevent it from spreading.

A leaflet describing the eradication campaign will be delivered to affected households prior to the commencement of the control program.

Mr Ashcroft said householders can help by providing easy access to their backyards and by not removing any home grown fruit from their property as it may cause another outbreak.

"All home-grown fruit should be consumed on the property and may only leave the property if it has been cooked," he said.

"Most fruits (including stone and pome fruit, berries, tomatoes, capsicums and chillies) are potential hosts for Queensland fruit fly."

Mr Ashcroft said the new detections highlight the need for vigilance by residents in the township and surrounding towns and that the success of the eradication campaign depends on householders' help and co-operation.

"It's also very important for residents within Yackandandah to look after their fruit trees, by pruning them to a manageable height and picking ripe fruit before it can fall to the ground.

"Any unwanted home grown fruit should be placed in an intact plastic bag, sealed and left in the sun for at least three days to kill any fruit fly maggots and then the bag placed in the rubbish bin" said Mr Ashcroft.

A 15-kilometre suspension zone has been declared for movement of fruit to Melbourne and sensitive interstate markets including South Australia and Western Australia. Tasmania requires an 80-kilometre suspension zone. Host fruit for these fruit fly sensitive markets must be treated prior to movement from the suspension zone.

Mr Ashcroft said the 15km control area around Yackandandah includes the townships of Glen Creek, Leneva, and Stanley. The 80km suspension zone includes the townships of Wangaratta, Glenrowan and Rutherglen.

Any enquiries regarding the movement of commercial consignments of host fruit from the suspension zone to sensitive markets should be directed to the Fruit Fly Hotline on 1800 210 411.

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