



Media release

From the Department of Primary Industries

Tuesday, February 3, 2009

FRUIT FLY DETECTED AT ECHUCA

A Queensland fruit fly outbreak has been detected at Echuca.

The Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI) will be declaring a 15-kilometre suspension zone around the detection point for the movement of host fruit to Melbourne and sensitive interstate markets including South Australia and Western Australia. An 80km suspension zone applies for Tasmania.

DPI Plant Standards Program Manager Bill Ashcroft said that all host fruit must be certified under a DPI arrangement prior to leaving the 15km suspension zone.

“The Echuca outbreak is within the Fruit Fly Exclusion Zone (FFEZ) and an eradication campaign will be conducted to prevent the pest from spreading to major horticultural production areas,” Mr Ashcroft said.

Mr Ashcroft added that the cooperation of residents will be a key to the success of the campaign.

“Affected households in the immediate area will receive a leaflet describing the eradication campaign, and DPI field teams will be visiting properties to implement control measures.

“We strongly encourage residents of the Echuca area to help by providing easy access to their backyards, by not removing any home-grown fresh fruit from their property, and by looking after any host trees they may have.

“Host trees in home gardens should be pruned to a height which allows fruit to be easily picked when it ripens.”

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

Mr Ashcroft said unwanted home-grown fruit should be placed in an intact plastic bag, sealed, and either left in the sun for at least a week or placed in a freezer for two days, in order to kill any fruit fly maggots. The bag can then be disposed of in the rubbish bin.

Enquires should be directed to the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186. Further information is available on the DPI website www.dpi.vic.gov.au

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