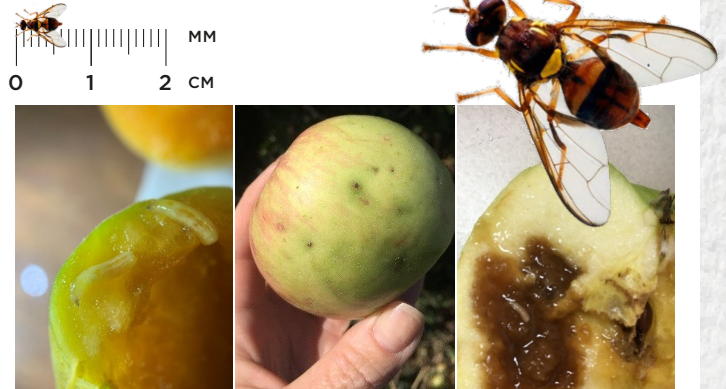


Queensland Fruit Fly (*Bactrocera tryoni*)

Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) is a significant pest that lays its eggs in many common homegrown fruit and vegetables, making the flesh inedible (See *Agriculture Victoria's List of QFF Host Fruits* agriculture.vic.gov.au/qff). By taking action to control QFF in your garden, you can help to prevent it from establishing in Darebin.

How to identify QFF

Adult flies are 5-8mm long and reddish-brown in colour with transparent wings. Their bodies are wedge shaped and plumper at the tail end, with distinct yellow markings including yellow 'shoulder pads' and triangle at the mid-section. QFF lay eggs under the surface of the fruit or fruiting vegetable, leaving a small sting mark the size of a top of a pin. The larva is 2-9mm long, white/cream in colour.



Images: (Top) QFF (Horticulture Innovation Aus), (L-R) QFF larvae on an apricot, QFF stings on an apple, QFF larvae in an apple where flesh has turned to brown jelly (B. Koll, Agribusiness Yarra Valley)

How to manage QFF in your garden

MONITOR: Hang traps to indicate if fruit flies are active in your area and when you need to act. Pheromone-based traps monitor for male QFF and protein based traps monitor for female QFF. You can also check fruit skin for small puncture marks (from females laying eggs). Cut suspected fruit open to check for larvae.

NETTING: Net vegetables and fruit trees (after pollination) with a fine UV stable mesh (2mm is recommended) over a temporary frame or drape over a tree and secure firmly around the trunk. Check netting for holes regularly and make sure fruit is not touching the netting. Alternatively, place mesh bags/sleeves over individual fruits, when there are small hard fruitlets, and well before the fruit starts to ripen.

PRUNING: Prune fruit trees to a manageable height for easy netting and harvesting. Remove fruit trees altogether if you don't intend to harvest them, or contact the Darebin Fruit Squad (divrs.org.au/urban-food-fruit-squad) to harvest your fruit and contribute to local food relief efforts!

GARDEN HYGIENE: Harvest produce as it ripens. Pick up and dispose of fallen fruit regularly.

CHEMICAL CONTROLS: Bait sprays and insecticides are options for QFF management but may not be suitable in organic gardening. If using, refer to your local nursery and always follow label directions.

What to do if you find QFF in your fruit

- Process infested fruit by boiling, freezing or solarising (place in a sealed plastic bag and leave in very hot sun for a week to kill larvae, taking care to prevent birds and rodents breaking the bag open in the process). Dispose in your landfill bin.
- DO NOT put infested fruit in your compost bin or worm farm as they can survive and spread.
- Report infestations to Council via our QFF Reporting form (bit.ly/3DzNlv8) so we can monitor for hotspots and outbreaks.
- Tell your friends and neighbours to help keep Darebin fruit fly free!

For more information, visit darebin.vic.gov.au/queenslandfruitfly



SEASONAL CALENDAR OF BACKYARD JOBS



Winter

June	July	August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prune fruit trees to a manageable height for ease of fruit picking and netting • Remove unwanted QFF host plants and trees • Check and repair netting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace unwanted QFF host trees with non-host plants • Harvest and pick up fallen fruit

Remember: In winter the risk of QFF is lower but winter fruits can provide a food source for overwintering fruit flies. These include apples, pears, quinces and pomegranates left hanging on trees and ripe winter citrus such as oranges, mandarins and grapefruit

Spring

September	October	November
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove unwanted QFF host plants and trees • Design your vegetable garden layout and cropping cycles so that QFF populations don't build up • Set up traps to monitor for QFF and check traps weekly 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest and clean up any excess ripe citrus, especially lemons, grapefruit and late season oranges • Harvest, pick up fallen fruit and loquats • If using chemical controls always refer to labels

Remember: In spring high risk fruits are late season citrus such as grapefruit and early ripening hosts such as loquats

Summer

December	January	February
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net your vegetable garden, fruit trees (after pollination) or bag individual fruit • Check all fruit for sting marks • Heat treat or freeze infested fruit and vegetables to kill QFF larvae 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trap and monitor QFF population levels weekly • If using chemical controls always refer to labels • Harvest and pick up fallen fruit everyday

Remember: In summer high risk fruits are stonefruit such as cherries, apricots, peaches, nectarines and plums. High risk vegetables are tomatoes, capsicums and chillies

Autumn


March	April	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest and pick up any fallen fruit to break the QFF lifecycle • Heat treat or freeze fallen and infested fruit to kill QFF maggots 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor for QFF and check traps weekly • If using chemical controls always refer to labels • Wash, dry and fold netting and put away

Remember: In autumn high risk fruits are pomefruit such as apples, pears and quinces, early citrus such as mandarins, also other fruit such as pomegranates and ornamental fruiting plants such as feijoa (pineapple guava)

Sources: Agriculture Victoria, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Goulburn Murray Valley Fruit Fly AWM Program, NSW DPI.

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