

FRUIT FLY HYGIENE IN THE GARDEN

Could we all please be aware that fruit fly will be on the move now and we need to put in place traps and good hygiene to avoid problems of maggots in fruit and veggies.

Everyone growing tomatoes, capsicum, eggplants in their plots and the fruit trees in the garden can be affected.



Advice from Josh Byrnes:

“The first and most important step when attempting to prevent fruit fly attack is good hygiene. Mature maggots pupate in the soil to remerge as adult flies and collecting infested fruit breaks their lifecycle. Signs that eggs have been laid in fruit are dimples or weeping clear sap on the fruit. Pick these fruit off as well as any damaged and rotting fruit. It's also important to pick up fallen fruit as soon as it drops before maggots have a chance to escape from the fruit and burrow into the ground to pupate.”

To kill maggots, immerse them in a sealed bucket of water for a couple of days or put them in a sealed plastic bag and put it in the sun. If you have chooks, they will appreciate them!”

Please use a trap in your plot and can the committee consider for the fruit trees around the garden: various options listed as follows:

1. Cera Trap

This is for the attraction and mass trapping of Queensland (Q) and Mediterranean (Med) male and female fruit fly. With this non-toxic, long lasting, food based protein liquid

solution you can for the first time 'set and forget' a trap for these destructive pests in WA, VIC, QLD and NSW. This well designed and proven product (throughout Australia, Spain, Israel and Mexico) does not require you to decide which type of fly or which sex you are catching. Just open the jar, attach the lid and hang adjacent to your susceptible crop. \$29.95 from **Bunnings – if you bought one last year you only need to buy replacement bait - 1L for \$25.98 (presumably enough for two).**

2. Exclusion

Frost Guard, Cloth Fruit Saver Net, and Paper Exclusion Bags, can all be bought from **Greenharvest**. Last year I used Frost Guard from Bunnings and cut out various sized pieces to cover fruit tying with string around bunches or individual tomatoes. Worked very well.

3. Jerry Coleby-Williams DIY fruit fly trap

Commercial traps are quite expensive - they cost between twenty and thirty dollars each and then you have to replenish the bait and that can be almost as expensive.

At home, I use something very cheap indeed. I use a PET (Polyethylene terephthalate) bottle and it's got a hole - big enough for a fruit fly to get in - half way up. The reason it's not at the top is because fruit fly, if they escape drowning inside, will fly up to the top.

The bait I use is a solution of vegemite and water - there's half a teaspoon of vegemite in there and there's a drop of dishwashing detergent in and that means that any fruit fly that get wet will drown.

You have to replace this every week because sometimes it can be so successful, you'll get so many fruit fly in there, it'll put the others off from entering.

Screw on the bottle top, then tie twine around the bottle's neck and hang from your trees.

Space them two metres apart and replace the bait once a week. How easy is that?

4. Josh Byrnes DIY fruit fly trap

Josh says, "Start by making some holes half-way up a plastic drink bottle. They should be about 10 millimetres wide and evenly spaced." Josh recommends fruit juice for the lure but he also adds a pinch of sugar and a sprinkle of brewers' yeast to make fermenting sweet syrup that, Josh says, "Fruit flies just can't resist."

Hang two or three traps per tree and change the lure weekly when the pests are active. There are also commercial pheromone traps and effective, certified organic baits available from garden centres.

Last year at the garden we made a recipe of fruit juice, sugar, vegemite and detergent.