

Meeting 31 of the National Fruit Fly Council (the Council) was held on the 20th of September 2022 with attendees present at the Plant Health Australia Offices Canberra and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Updates and Outlook

New South Wales

It was reported that much of the recent focus of NSW DPI has been centered around the Varroa mite incursion response. The response has been progressing well and most teams within NSW DPI are returning to business as usual. It was noted that NSW will chair the 11th International Symposium on Fruit Flies of Economic Importance ISFFEI (Nov 13-18, 2022) at Macquarie University.

In collaboration with PHA, a biosecurity exercise on *B dorsalis* incursion scenario will be developed to be held in May 2023. PHA will be hosting a similar exercise in QLD.

The NSW trapping grid review for the whole of NSW is underway. The current trapping grid includes The Sydney basin, Port Kembla, Newcastle, Riverina (former Fruit Fly Exclusion Zone (FFEZ)) and Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area (GSPFA).

South Australia

PIRSA continues to respond to eradicate several Queensland fruit fly outbreaks in the Riverland and is in the process of expanding production out of the Port Augusta SIT facility to support this.

The rest of the state remains fruit fly free following last year's successful eradication in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

It was also noted that PIRSA had provided input into the Deloitte and PwC reviews and were looking forward to the next steps.

Queensland

Although QLD has been very busy with responses there are no special issues of significance to report. The Torres Strait program was progressing and market access research projects were going well and either finished or near completion.

Like the other jurisdictions, Qld has held conversations with Deloitte & PwC. A proposed market access centre at the Redlands research station, Brisbane, consolidating market access and fruit fly research and moving the currently Cairns based research team to this new location was highlighted. It was suggested that this infrastructure may be a potential opportunity for investment by the commonwealth under the Building Resilience to Manage Fruit Fly package.

Tasmania

Over the past few months fruit fly had not been an issue in Tasmania. An update was provided on the Tasmanian "Securing our Borders initiative" which runs from early October to end of May and is an intensive period for border security and diagnostics teams. Over the past few years this has been a successful operation.

It was noted that Tasmania was the first jurisdiction for auditing of the new fruit fly management system from DAFF. The process was a very positive, constructive, and valuable experience to learn and re-establish connections between Tasmania and DAFF colleagues. As per the other jurisdictions Tasmania has had recent discussions with Deloitte and PwC.

Western Australia



Conversations have been had with Deloitte around the proposed investment. WA was one of the sites for the Medfly facility, and DPIRD have let the consultants know that WA would need funding for ongoing personnel and operations cost as well as infrastructure.

WA is also in conversations nationally with CSIRO and other stakeholders about a new preharvest management proposal to be submitted to Hort Innovation.

Victoria

Work is progressing across projects against Victoria's fruit fly strategy, including the area wide management project which is 18 months in, with planning now beginning for the second half of this project.

A statewide awareness and education campaign remains in place, with Melbourne metro focus underway engaging local government. Similar to NSW, Victoria is currently reviewing their trapping network using an incursion risk and evidence-based model.

Like other stakeholders, discussions have been had with Deloitte and PwC consultants.

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)

The members were thanked for their input with Deloitte and PwC the feedback being received is valuable and DAFF is appreciative of the engagement. The Smart Fruit Fly measures is completed, and further details were included in the meeting papers pack. The research projects as part of this will be wrapping up in June next year, with several presenting at the ISFFEI Conference in November.

Industry

There were some considerable impacts to industry at present which are likely to continue in the near future including the current wet weather conditions, the rising cost of production inputs, supply challenges and labour shortages. Combined with the mild winter conditions and the result is an exacerbated pest load which was confirmed via local trapping networks.

NFFC Manager update

The development of the two NFFC specialist working groups centered around i) Research and ii) the FF management toolbox were highlighted. The working groups will assist with the development of national priorities, gap analysis, annual cycles and future NFFC activities. Nominations for the executive group have been canvassed and received building upon the development of the new governance model, and suitable applicants have been accepted.

The need for the Executive Committee to assist with the development of an NFFC Stakeholder Engagement Plan was stated along with influence mapping across FF priorities. The development of a National FF Symposium in mid-2023 with a focus on future directions and opportunities across the horizon for fruit fly more broadly was also noted. Engagement activity will be building up to the symposium by introducing concepts, key themes, and opportunities, particularly through monthly themed webinars and think tanks. It was noted that the engagement and communication activity will leverage existing communication with a thematic focus on the fruit fly management toolbox. New opportunities will also be realized through the updates being developed for the Prevent Fruit Fly website.

It was also noted that industry engagement around the National FF Management Protocols through the Horticulture Export and Import Consultative Committee (HEICC) has been initiated.

DAFF Engagement and Extension Project



National System presentations were delivered to key stakeholders tailored to increase the collective consistent understanding of the national fruit fly system. The information developed for the presentation will be leveraged for further use and broader dissemination as targeted messages.

A hypothetical scenario-based exercise focusing on a Medfly incursion into Eastern Australia with workshops held in Brisbane and Melbourne with online access has been delivered. Feedback received from the participants was positive and the approach recommended for other applications. A range of draft recommendations were generated which were centered around preparedness research, extension, and education. Harmonization of requirements was a consistent theme in the recommendations as was capturing the lessons learnt by South Australia in their current responses.

Next Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is scheduled online for the 13th of December 2022.

