

NFFFC Communique

MEETING 20, 4 DECEMBER 2019, MELBOURNE

The 20th meeting of the National Fruit Fly Council (the Council) was held in Melbourne on 4 December 2019. The interim Council Chair advised that the National Biosecurity Committee is pleased with the recent progress being made by the Council.

National Fruit Fly Strategy

The Council considered a draft 2020-2025 National Fruit Fly Strategy (the Strategy). This Strategy is being developed to address changes in the national fruit fly system since the original 2008 Strategy was released such as limitations in chemical availability, developments in treatment options, and changes to fruit fly distribution profiles. The Council agreed it was important that fruit fly affected industries further shape this draft Strategy and it will be circulated to peak industry bodies for their consideration and input over the next few months with a view to finalising by mid-2020.

Progress report of 2008 National Fruit Fly Strategy

The Council endorsed the progress report of the 2008 National Fruit Fly Strategy. The report provides a summary of progress against each of the twenty Strategy recommendations and was informative for the Council in deliberating the new draft Strategy, identifying where significant advances had been made and areas that still require focus.

Smart Fruit Fly Management Measure

The Department of Agriculture (DA) provided an update on activities under the Smart Fruit Fly Management Measure. DA continue to work with stakeholders to strengthen Australia's National Fruit Fly Management Protocols (the Protocols, formerly the Code of Practice) and are developing a national policy on the use of Sterile Insect Technology (SIT). Information was also provided to the Council on the consideration of projects to be funded under the fruit fly Research Program.

Fruit fly phenology and demographic ecology

The senior principal entomologist from Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries gave a presentation on a potential project in the field of fruit fly phenology and demographic ecology that could be considered under the Research Program. The Council acknowledged the importance of research in this field for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of fruit fly management in Australia.

Western Australia Medfly SIT facility

The Council discussed the future of the Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) SIT facility in Western Australia (due to close in January 2020). The Council agreed that continued access to SIT Medflies as a fruit fly management tool is in the national interest and that the facility played a vital role in achieving this over the next five years. A business case is now being prepared to consider national cost sharing options for the facility.



Regional workshops

The Council discussed the delivery of a series of regional fruit fly workshops across a selection of major regional growing areas of Australia by October 2021. The workshops will focus on sharing relevant and up to date information on national fruit fly management activities, and regionally appropriate practices for the management and/or prevention of fruit fly.

Council communications

A Communication Strategy has been developed to promote the visibility and credibility of the Council. Activities include enhancing the Prevent Fruit Fly website, elevating the Prevent Fruit Fly twitter account, distributing a monthly Prevent Fruit Fly e-newsletter, and delivering regional workshops and national fruit fly events.

Next meeting

The next Council meeting (Meeting 21) is scheduled to be held in Bundaberg on 5 March 2020.

