

# NFFC Communique

## MEETING 22, JUNE 2020

Due to COVID-19 and its associated restrictions, the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the National Fruit Fly Council (the Council) was held over two virtual sessions on 3 June (via teleconference) and 10 June (via Skype) 2020.

### Industry Membership

The Council welcomed Tasmanian apple grower, Brett Squibb, and Riverland Fruit Fly Coordinator, Brett Kennedy, as new members to the Council. Brett and Brett both bring a wealth of knowledge and experience, and the Council is delighted to have them on board.

### National Fruit Fly Strategy

Following extensive consultation, the draft 2020-25 National Fruit Fly Strategy has been professionally edited and the final draft is now ready for endorsement by industry and governments. The Council agreed to organise a joint forum with fruit fly affected industries, to seek endorsement of the Strategy and discuss the associated 2020-21 Implementation Plan. Following industry endorsement of the Strategy, endorsement will be sought from the Council, Plant Health Committee (PHC) and the National Biosecurity Committee before the Strategy is submitted to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AGSOC) and the Agriculture Ministers Forum (AGMIN) for noting.

### East-West Fruit Fly Distribution Profile

Council discussed the value of the East-West fruit fly distribution profile in international trade negotiations. It was agreed that information on the distribution profile should be collated and shared with key stakeholders to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining pest freedom for Medfly in the eastern states and Qfly in Western Australia.

### Sustainable Funding Options for National Fruit Fly Management

The issue of sustainable funding for national fruit fly activities is significant and complex and has been under discussion for a long time. The Council discussed the concept of a sustainable funding model and agreed it should be interpreted as *determining potential ongoing funding mechanism(s) for critical aspects of the national fruit fly system*. The Council endorsed the preparation of a project proposal to formally consider the development of a sustainable funding model and agreed to refer the proposal to PHC and Hort Innovation for funding consideration.

### The future of SITplus

The Hort Innovation funding for the SITplus program ends on 21 September 2022. The Council were provided with a number of scenarios for the program to continue after the current funding expires. These are being considered by the SITplus Stakeholder Committee, noting that ongoing industry investment in fruit fly activities will be crucial to continued government support. A benefit cost analysis of the program is also



expected to be undertaken this year to help inform decisions on the future of SIT as a management tool for Qfly.

### **ABARES analysis on Medfly eradication and Pest Free Areas**

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences provided the Council with an update on two fruit fly studies they are undertaking; an assessment of the technical and economic feasibility of eradicating Medfly from Australia and a benefit cost analysis of maintaining the Riverland and Tasmanian fruit fly Pest Free Areas. The studies, while related, are two separate pieces of work commissioned by DAWE. The Council will continue to engage with ABARES and DAWE as these studies progress.

### **Council Communications**

Due to COVID-19 and its associated restrictions, the Council are unable to progress a number of its planned face-to-face initiatives and are instead focused on increasing the Council's online presence through the [Prevent Fruit Fly website](#), [twitter account](#) and [e-newsletter](#). Stakeholders are being encouraged to connect with these platforms to learn more about the work of the Council and current fruit fly issues.

### **Regional Workshops and National Fruit Fly Symposium**

The Council are exploring online delivery methods such as webinars, video messages, podcasts etc. as alternatives to face-to-face regional workshops. The Council is also exploring options for a National Fruit Fly Symposium to be delivered in early-mid 2021, supported by two workshops in the lead up to the Symposium.

### **Next meeting**

The next Council meeting (Meeting 23) is scheduled to be held in Hobart on 26-27 August 2020. However, this will be dependent on COVID-19 and its associated restrictions at that time.

