

NFFC Communique

MEETING 24, 11-12 NOVEMBER 2020

Due to COVID-19 and its associated restrictions, the 24th meeting of the National Fruit Fly Council (the Council) was held over two virtual sessions on 11 and 12 November 2020.

2020-2025 National Fruit Fly Strategy

The 2020-25 National Fruit Fly Strategy was officially launched at Meeting 24 of the Council. This followed endorsement of the Strategy by the Council, fruit fly affected industry members of Plant Health Australia (PHA), Plant Health Committee (PHC) and National Biosecurity Committee (NBC). The Strategy has also been provided to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AGSOC) and the Agriculture Ministers Forum (AGMIN).

The Strategy and associated 2020-2021 Implementation Plan are now available on the [Prevent Fruit Fly](#) and [Plant Health Australia](#) websites. The Council will monitor progress against the Strategy and publish annual progress reports.

2020 Annual Report

The Council endorsed the *National Fruit Fly Council 2020 Annual Report*. The Annual Report highlights the Council's recent focus on stakeholder engagement and describes an array of activities and achievements by the Council over the last twelve months. Stakeholders are encouraged to read through the Annual Report, which is available on the [Prevent Fruit Fly website](#).

Sterile Insect Technique policy

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) has developed a draft policy for fruit fly sterile insect technique (SIT) in relation to trade. Industry consultation will commence in December 2020 and will run for a period of two months. The consultation process will aim to: provide stakeholders with a clear understanding of the policy; understand the impact of the policy on industry; and build stakeholder confidence in Australia's ability to maintain trade and market access.

NFFC Future directions and priorities

The Council had an interim discussion on the future directions and priorities of the Council. The Council acknowledged that a number of the current fruit fly challenges will remain a priority in 2021 i.e. the East-West distribution profile; the future of the SITPlus Program (funding ends in June 2021); the future of the Mediterranean Fruit Fly SIT facility (funding ends in June 2021); the future of the Council (contract expires in October 2021); the future of the *Exotic Fruit Fly in the Torres Strait Eradication Program* (program ends in June 2021). The Council also identified a number of future priorities including chemical limitations for treatment of fruit fly and the lesser fruit fly species.



Council Communications

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

Regional Workshops

The Council has commenced a series of webinars to raise awareness of national fruit fly activities. The first of the series, a webinar on the Research Program for Strengthening Australia's Fruit Fly System (the Research Program), was held on 17th August 2020. The webinar was attended by 100 government and industry stakeholders and provided attendees with information on the Australian Government's \$16.9M Smart Fruit Fly Management measure and three of the projects funded under the Research Program for Strengthening Australia's Fruit Fly System.

The second webinar was held on 25th September 2020. The webinar was attended by 77 government and industry stakeholders and provided attendees with information on the Sterile Insect Technique for Mediterranean Fruit Fly and Queensland Fruit Fly.

The third webinar was held on 26th October 2020 with the theme of Phytosanitary Irradiation. This webinar attracted 92 attendees and provided a 'supply chain' view of the use of irradiation as an end-point treatment for fruit fly, hearing perspectives from a grower, the Steritech irradiation provider, a retailer, and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWE).

Summaries of the webinars can be found on the [Prevent Fruit Fly website](#).

The next webinar is on the Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) Scheme and is tentatively scheduled for early December. Please keep an eye out for more information in the coming weeks.

2021 National Fruit Fly Symposium

The Council is planning a National Fruit Fly Symposium to be delivered in mid-2021, supported by a program of workshops in the lead up to the Symposium which seek to identify national fruit fly priorities. The themes for the workshops are:

- a) living with established fruit fly
- b) maintaining pest free areas
- c) risks of minor/exotic species
- d) collaborating on fruit fly research needs.

The outcomes of the workshops will be consolidated and used to build the agenda for the Symposium, which will be interactive and involve a mixture of presentations and panel discussions.

Next meeting

The next Council meeting (Meeting 25) is scheduled to be held in February 2021. The location of the meeting will be dependent on COVID-19 and its associated restrictions at that time.

