

You can help reduce the fruit fly problem

Fruit fly is a major horticultural pest that attacks a wide range of fruit and vegetables, leaving them inedible and unmarketable.

There are over **300 fruit fly species** found in Australia. In **Western Australia**, the **Mediterranean fruit fly**, known as **Medfly**, is one of the most destructive horticultural pests.

Fruit flies can ruin **fruit and vegetables in your garden** and destroy **crops grown by Australian farmers**.

Why is your help so important?

We all have a role to play as fruit flies are a shared problem for home gardeners and Australian farmers.

Home gardens and orchards provide the perfect habitat for fruit fly to establish, breed and spread.

Fruit flies are mobile over short distances and can travel between properties and neighbouring orchards. They can travel even further hidden in infested fruit.

A fruit fly problem in your backyard can not only ruin your fruit but can quickly spread to nearby properties, orchards and farms.

Controlling and preventing fruit fly in your garden will mean you have less fruit flies bothering you and spoiling any produce you grow yourself. An added bonus is you will also be helping our local fruit and vegetable farmers and the local economy.

No matter how big or small your garden, you and your neighbours can help reduce fruit fly populations in your area.

By controlling Medfly at home, you will be preventing other fruit fly species from becoming destructive and costly pests, as the control and prevention methods for Medfly work for all fruit flies.



Mediterranean fruit fly

When are they most active?

Fruit fly activity can happen all year round, depending on the climate and temperature. In the Southwest, Medfly are active in late spring, summer, and autumn, and in winter when temperatures exceed 12°C.

What do Medfly look like?

Adults are 3-5mm long.

Mottled transparent wings with distinctive brown bands.

Light brown body with numerous black areas in a characteristic pattern.

Larvae (maggots) are creamy white and about 7-8mm long.



Look for signs of damage

- ▶ Infested fruit and vegetables show sting marks or puncture wounds.
- ▶ Skin around the sting marks becomes discoloured.
- ▶ Maggots grow inside produce feeding on the flesh and causing it to decompose.



Break the life cycle

Fruit fly can lay hundreds of eggs during its life span. Multiple generations can occur in a year, when temperature and humidity conditions are ideal.

- ▶ The female pierces (stings) maturing fruit and lays eggs just below the surface.
- ▶ Eggs hatch after two to three days and the creamy-white larvae (maggots) start developing.
- ▶ When fully grown, larvae stop feeding and jump out from produce, burrowing into the ground and change into brown, barrel-shaped pupae.
- ▶ Adult Medfly will develop inside the pupae and emerge from the ground, ready to breed in five days.

Infested fruit or vegetables that fall to the ground allow the life cycle to continue.



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What you can do to help

While there is no quick fix for controlling fruit flies, these simple actions can have a big impact:

Control and prevent fruit fly on your property by following the CUBE tips:

- ▶ **C**lear ripe and fallen fruit.
- ▶ **U**se homemade or commercial traps to drown fruit flies.
- ▶ **B**ait to kill flies with organic insecticide.
- ▶ **E**xclude flies from touching fruit by placing nets and bags over the fruit you want to keep.

If you are not looking after your fruit trees or vegetable plants, consider removing them. Your neighbours will thank you.

Treat any fallen or infested fruit or vegetables before disposal:

- ▶ Seal it inside a plastic bag and place it in a freezer for two days
- ▶ Microwave or boil produce to kill larvae and eggs
- ▶ Seal it in a black plastic bag and leave it in the sun for at least seven days.

Don't put untreated produce in your compost or worm farm, or into your rubbish or green collection.

Traps are ideal to catch fruit flies to monitor if numbers are increasing or reducing in your area.

Treating discarded produce will prevent reintroducing fruit fly in your garden or moving the problem elsewhere.



Scan the QR code or visit preventfruitfly.com.au for more info.



Methods to control or prevent fruit fly: preventfruitfly.com.au/methods/

Identifying different fruit fly species: fruitflyidentification.org.au/

More information about Medfly: agric.wa.gov.au/medfly/control-options-backyards