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TASMANIAN FRUIT FLY TRAPS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the traps for?

Tasmania has Area Freedom status from specific fruit fly species with interstate markets, as well as important overseas markets such as Taiwan, Japan, Korea and China. Products exported under this arrangement include apples, pears, tomatoes, stone-fruit and berryfruit. In order for Tasmania to export fruit to these countries and other parts of Australia, we must show evidence that we are free from fruit fly by undertaking the trapping program.

Also, ensuring that fruit flies are not present in Tasmania protects fruit growing industries' products as a whole, as well as the environment and community assets such as private and community gardens.

The traps enable Biosecurity Tasmania to provide evidence that we don't have these fruit flies as well as also acting as another level of early warning.

Fruit fly traps are currently distributed right across the State in 'high risk' areas (near ports where fruit and vegetables arrive from other states) and 'low risk' areas (where fruit fly hosts are grown).

How the traps work and what do is inside them?

The fruit fly traps consist of a clear plastic container with a wick (cotton pad) suspended from wire inside. The wick is impregnated with a fruit fly attractant and a pesticide. Fruit flies are attracted to the trap from up to 500 metres away and are killed upon entering the trap. Different attractants are used for specific fruit fly species, so you may have more than one trap on your property. The pesticide is either Dichlorvos or Maldison, dependent on the target fruit fly. The traps have a label on them that tells you exactly what is in them and what species of fruit fly they attract. If you'd like any further information about the chemicals used, please contact us.

The pesticide contained within each wick is poisonous if it is swallowed and can cause irritation to the eyes if touched. Please do not handle the trap at all and if there is any issue, contact us or the Poisons Information Centre – they will need to know the information that is contained on the label.

Should I have traps on my property if I have children or pets?

It really depends on your situation. We place the traps in areas out of reach of children and pets in normal circumstances. If your pets or children are likely to be curious and interfere with the trap, it may not be advisable for you to have the traps at all or where they can access it. Please discuss with us if you are concerned.

How often will it get checked and how?

All traps are inspected by Biosecurity Tasmania staff weekly from 1 September to 31 May and fortnightly during the winter months from 1 June to 31 August each year. Trap checks will usually be conducted during normal business hours, but could possibly be checked at other times during daylight hours.

Inspection consists of a visual examination of each trap with wicks changed as scheduled. Trap audit tags are marked or punched at the appropriate week. Specimen insects are collected for laboratory examination if present.

What happens if a fruit fly is found in a trap on my property?

If suspect flies are found in the traps, they are examined by an Entomologist to identify them. If they are confirmed as a fruit fly, we will contact you to arrange a visit to your property. During the property visit, we will examine host products that may be present, such as fruit on trees or in your compost bin. Our aim will be to try and work out where the fruit fly has come from. As fruit fly can fly a considerable distance, we will also visit other properties in the area and put some additional traps in place too.

Under what circumstances do I need to contact you about the traps on my property?

Please contact us if:

- You want to have a trap re-located within your property. For example if you want to remove the tree or branch of a tree where the trap is located;
- If you notice a trap is damaged or missing;
- If you are moving house;
- If you would like the trap/s removed permanently from your property; If access changes to your property (eg, if you put a lock on your gate) If you have any concerns or questions.

How will Biosecurity Tasmania use any personal information collected during this process?

Personal information will be managed in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*. Your personal information will be used for the primary purpose for which it is collected, and may be disclosed to courts and other agencies authorised to collect it. Personal information may also be disclosed to other public sector bodies where necessary for the efficient storage and use of the information.