



*Our parasitoid rearing facility at Tatura*

## Help us to help fruit industries in Victoria.

The recent increase in fruit fly populations in regional towns and cities is of concern to fruit and vegetable growers across the state.

The concern is that these “source populations” of flies then disperse out into the orchards, where they cause serious damage to crops and threaten sales on domestic and international markets.

So reducing fruit fly in towns and cities could be a major step towards reducing the fruit fly problem in Victoria.

Not to mention less grubs in your fruit and veg!

THANK YOU for reading this leaflet.

## How to contact us

If you have fruit trees or vegetables in your garden, we'd love to hear from you.

No fruit on the trees right now? Drop us a line and let us know which fruit trees you have. We'll contact you nearer fruiting time to remind you about our research program

The national fruit fly biocontrol program is led by Dr Paul Cunningham at Agriculture Victoria. Dr Lucy McLay and Dr Fazila Yousuf are coordinating the release trials.

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This project is a nationwide collaboration funded by the Department of Agriculture Water and Resources, and Hort Innovation, using the apple and pear, citrus, rubus, strawberry, summerfruit, table grape and vegetable levies, co-investment from state governments, and Australian horticultural industries

**Hort  
Innovation**



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture  
and Water Resources**



## NATIONAL FRUIT FLY BIOCONTROL PROGRAM

We are releasing natural enemies of fruit flies in your neighborhood to help reduce grubs in your fruit & veg.

*We're hoping you can help us!*

**AGRICULTURE VICTORIA**



*A female parasitoid hunting for a fruit fly egg .*

## Parasitoids: our friends and the fruit fly's arch enemy

Parasitoids are tiny insects that are renowned for their ability to hunt down their prey—other insects! The adult parasitoid uses its acute sense of smell like a sniffer dog, locating its "host" and then laying an egg. The parasitoid larva then feeds on its host and eventually kills it. Parasitoids are used throughout the world as safe and effective biological control (biocontrol) agents for managing many agricultural pests.

In Australia parasitoids that attack Queensland fruit fly thrive in Queensland and northern NSW, where they can have a dramatic effect on fruit fly populations. But these natural enemies are largely absent from Victoria. We believe this is at least part of the reason why fruit fly populations are increasing in our state.

## The National Fruit Fly Biocontrol Program

Agriculture Victoria is leading a new research program that aims to develop a biocontrol strategy for fruit flies, using parasitoids. Over the next 18 months, we will be releasing parasitoids across Victoria, and assessing their impact on fruit fly.

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*Your neighborhood is one of the first to benefit from our releases*

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Last year, we collected wild fruit fly parasitoids (*Fopius arisanus*) from Queensland and have mass-reared them in our facility at Agriculture Victoria, Tatura. We have now begun releasing parasitoids in urban localities and orchards around the state. We have chosen **five urban release points** to begin with. Your neighborhood is one!

### Are parasitoids safe?

Absolutely. These parasitoids *only* attack fruit flies and are completely harmless to all other animals. They are only a few millimeters long and look like tiny winged ants with long antennae. They are often called parasitoid wasps, and belong to the same insect group (Hymenoptera) as bees, wasps, and ants—but they can't and won't sting you or your pets.



*Here's one of the parasitoids we are releasing.*

## We need your help.

We are very keen to collect as much information as we can about how well the parasitoid population in your neighborhood is controlling Queensland fruit fly.

If you have a fruit tree in your garden that is bearing fruit we would very much like to take away a sample of infested fruit and examine it for signs of fruit flies and parasitoids. This will provide us with invaluable data on how well the parasitoids are doing.

We will need fruit throughout the study, which ends in March 2022, so please keep this leaflet handy in a drawer!

P.S. we are also keen to have infested veg.



*Please let us know if you have any infested fruit. We'd love to take it off your hands!*