

# Fruit Flies

## Stakeholder Update #23

31 January 2020

In this update you will find information on the:

- Latest situation
- Snapshot of response activities
- Situation moving forward
- Timeline
- Compensation

### Latest situation

Following 11 months of intensive trapping, spring baiting, and inspections of hundreds of kilos of fruit without signs of further fruit flies, Biosecurity New Zealand is pleased to announce that there is **no** evidence of a breeding population of the Queensland fruit fly in the Northcote/Birkenhead areas. As a result, the Controlled Area Notice over the Northcote and Birkenhead areas of Auckland was lifted at **12 pm 31 January 2020**. All restrictions on the movement of fruit, vegetables and green waste have also been lifted.

The Queensland fruit fly is a serious pest, as it is known to damage a wide range of fruits and vegetables. If established, it could cause significant trade impacts to New Zealand's multi-billion dollar horticulture industry and cause a significant impact for home gardeners. Biosecurity New Zealand, in partnership with the horticultural industries, conducted a response to the pest which included 11 months of operational activity. This activity, along with movement restrictions on fresh produce and green waste, greatly impacted residents and businesses within the Northcote/Birkenhead controlled area.

The collaborative effort between MPI, horticulture, industry partners,ASUREQuality (MPI's operations provider), various regional councils and the community over the past 11 months has meant that MPI can now declare that New Zealand is Queensland fruit fly free.

Biosecurity New Zealand would like to express its sincere appreciation and gratitude for the ongoing support that was provided by horticulture industry, Northcote residents and businesses in what has been a lengthy response. The Queensland fruit fly could not have been eradicated without the help of the community and stakeholders.

### Snapshot of Response activities

- The first Queensland Fruit Fly was found in Devonport on 14 February 2019, at which point Biosecurity New Zealand established a response to the pest. Ten flies were subsequently detected in the Northcote area over a period of 6 months in 2019. During this time and ever since, we have been trapping intensively and monitoring the area for the presence of Queensland fruit fly. The last Queensland fruit fly, a single male, was detected on 15 July 2019.
- Movement controls on home-grown fruits and vegetables remained in place for the duration of the response dictated by the Controlled Area Notice. By controlling movement of host materials, Biosecurity New Zealand can control the potential spread of any Queensland fruit fly that may have remained in the area.
- A 12 week long spring baiting programme was undertaken between 19 August 2019 and 08 November 2019 to eliminate any flies that may have overwintered, prior to breeding as the seasons get warmer. Intensive

trapping was also conducted throughout the duration of the response, with 162 response-specific traps placed in the Northcote area.

- Traps were inspected every week. All samples were submitted (byASUREQuality and the public) to Biosecurity New Zealand's Entomology Laboratory for identification.
- Baiting and trapping activities showed no evidence of eggs, larvae, pupae or female fruit flies.
- The response is the second fully cost-shared biosecurity response under the Government-Industry Agreement. The horticulture industry was a huge contributor to the effectiveness of the operation, both in providing support at the Governance level and resource to help the teams in the field.

## Situation moving forward

- All restrictions on the movement of home-grown fruits, vegetables and green waste have been lifted. Businesses and residents are now free to move these in and out of Northcote/Birkenhead areas.
- New Zealand's international trading partners have been advised of lifting of the Controlled Area Notice and movement restrictions.
- All biosecurity wheelie bins and signage placed on the perimeter of the Controlled Area will be removed over the coming few days.
- The community will be receiving thank you leaflets over the next week, in appreciation of their support during response operational activities.
- Biosecurity New Zealand will continue monitoring for exotic species of fruit flies through the national Fruit Fly Surveillance Programme. The surveillance programme involves more than 7800 traps in residential backyards in areas of highest risk for fruit flies throughout the country.
- While the response is now completed, Biosecurity New Zealand is asking the public to remain vigilant and to report any signs of fruit fly in fruit or any insect that they suspect to be a fruit fly to Biosecurity New Zealand's Pest & Disease hotline (0800 80 99 66)

More information about the Queensland fruit fly response and the latest media release regarding end of operational activities can be found on our website:

<https://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/fruitfly>

Updates can also be found on our Facebook and Twitter channels.

## Further information

This is the **final** stakeholder update from the 2019 Fruit Fly Response team.

If you have further questions the information will be available on our website ([www.biosecurity.govt.nz/fruitfly](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/fruitfly)) or if you would like to speak to someone, please call 0800 80 99 66 or email [info@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:info@mpi.govt.nz)

## Timeline: Fruit flies found in Auckland, 2019

- **February 14 2019** - Single male Queensland fruit fly located in Devonport, on the North Shore. A Controlled Area Notice is put in place (February 15).
- **February 18 2019** - A different species of fruit fly, a male *facialis*, discovered in Ōtara, south Auckland. A Controlled Area Notice is put in place (February 19).
- **February 20 2019** - Another single male Queensland fruit fly found on the North Shore, this time in Northcote. A Controlled Area Notice is put in place (February 21).
- **February 21 2019** - A second single male *facialis* detected in Ōtara, only 70 metres from the first find.
- **February 23 2019** - Another single Queensland fruit fly found in Northcote.
- **February 28 2019** - A third single male Queensland fruit fly detected in Northcote, 270 metres from where the last was found.
- **March 4 2019** - A fourth male Queensland fruit fly detected in Northcote, approximately 80 metres from where the last was found.
- **March 5 2019** - A third single male *facialis* detected in Ōtara, 630 metres to the North of the last find.
- **March 10 2019** - A fifth single male Queensland fruit fly is found in Northcote, 60 metres from where the last was found.
- **March 14 2019** - A sixth single male Queensland fruit fly is found in Northcote 650 metres south of the original find. The operational response was stepped up to include baiting.
- **March 22 2019** – The Controlled Area Notices for Devonport and Ōtara are lifted after no further fruit flies were detected. Enhanced trapping continues as a precautionary measure.
- **April 12 2019** – The Controlled Area Notice for Northcote is lifted after no further fruit flies were detected. Enhanced trapping continues as a precautionary measure.
- **April 25 2019** – A seventh single male Queensland fruit fly is found in Northcote 460 metres away from where the cluster of male flies were found over a three week period (February 20 – March 14). A Controlled Area Notice is put in place (April 26).
- **May 10 2019** – An eighth single male Queensland fruit fly is found within the Northcote Controlled Area. The CAN is expanded westwards to include the new find.
- **May 29 2019**– A zone restrictions were removed from the area close to Northcote with this area becoming part of the B zone. A zone restrictions are still in place for the area near Birkenhead.
- **May 31 2019** – A ninth single male Queensland fruit fly is found in the current controlled area in Northcote, 80 metres from where the last was found.
- **July 15 2019** – A tenth single male Queensland fruit fly is found in the current controlled area in Northcote, 350 metres from where the last was found.
- **August 19 2019** – Spring baiting and trapping in the controlled area in Northcote begins.
- **November 8 2019** – Spring baiting ends in Northcote. CAN and movement restrictions remain in place, and trapping continues.
- **January 31 2020** – No further fruit flies found. CAN and all movement restrictions on fresh produce lifted.

## Compensation

Anyone who believes they have been affected by the issuing of the Controlled Area Notice (CAN) is entitled to apply for compensation for losses incurred as a direct result of the imposition of these legal powers.

For more information about compensation under the Biosecurity Act visit the MPI website:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/legal-overviews/biosecurity/biosecurity-act-compensation/>