

# Media Release

## *No Flies On Us* Expo takes the facts on Queensland Fruit Fly prevention and control to the community



The roving '*No Flies On Us*' Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) Expo created a surge of activity and increased knowledge on the pest when it visited six towns across the Goulburn Murray Valley from 27 August – 3 September.

Nearly 900 people took part in Community Information Sessions, Grower Forums and Lions International Primary Schools Education Program in participating towns as part of the Expo and sharpened their knowledge of QFF and the various management strategies.

The inaugural Expo was an opportunity to take the '*No Flies On Us*' message to the region's major towns and connect with primary schools, the community, industry and growers. More than 1000 show bags and 1500 information packs were distributed throughout the Expo period.

Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Coordinator, Ross Abberfield said the Expo was successful in increasing community awareness about the threat fruit fly poses and the simple steps people can take to protect against the pest.

"We took this opportunity to promote and resource the Primary Schools Education Program which is managed by Lions International, who is a key stakeholder in our project.

"We were thrilled to have 15 primary schools from across the region and approximately 600 students participate in the Expo, resulting in the construction of some 680 hand-made traps which have been put to good use in home gardens and yards out in the community to monitor QFF numbers so control measures can then be implemented by children and their parents," Mr Abberfield said.

"This is truly a case of Lions 'Serving the Community' and full credit to the Lions Clubs of Cobram, Mooroopna, Euroa, Echuca, Shepparton and Berrigan for their great effort", he said.

The use of traps is just one of the prevention and control strategies which form part of the area wide management applied to combat the spread of QFF in the Goulburn Murray Valley (GMV).

"The Expo highlighted the benefits of all members of the community coming together to raise awareness to protect our region against fruit fly. The public needs to be made aware of the devastating effect QFF has on our horticultural industry, the habitat where it can breed prolifically and the direct impact it has in urban areas where backyard fruit and vegetables are grown," Mr Abberfield said.

"I would also like to thank the 13 local community clubs and organisations that assisted with the Expo. In addition to Lions International, who are key stakeholders in the primary schools education program, Rotary International, Probus, Landcare, Soroptimists and Gardening Groups and Clubs came together to ensure we got the message out to everyone in the GMV," he said.



The Expo featured a range of specialists and guest speakers and provided information on topics from area wide management of QFF in the GMV, Victoria's state-wide fruit fly program, habitat and life cycle of QFF, prevention and control practices and the Goulburn Murray Valley regional trapping and monitoring program. The Expo also covered grower's advice on the impact of QFF on domestic and export markets in addition to how Sterile Insect Technology is used to control the spread of QFF.

The atmosphere as the Expo made its way from Cobram to Mooroopna, Euroa, Echuca, Shepparton and Berrigan was buzzing with school children, community barbecues and loads of giveaways adding to the attraction. Live radio broadcasts from a number of the towns visited and strong media interest added to the hype and activity which followed the path of the regional Expo.

"Support for the project has been tremendous with everyone including the media, schools, service clubs and community groups getting on board to spread the 'No Flies On Us' message to every person in the GMV and beyond," Mr Abberfield said.

"An extensive advertising and engagement campaign forms a key component of how we build community awareness on the management and control of fruit fly.

"In the lead up to and during the Expo we used radio, television, print media, online channels and electronic billboards to make sure the community were aware of the various events happening in each town as part of the inaugural Expo.

"We were able to connect with some 677,451 viewers through our television campaign, 163,000 listeners through our radio campaign and more than 180,000 readers through newsprint about the Expo and the importance of working together as a community to minimise the effects of fruit fly through advertising and editorial coverage," Mr Abberfield said.

The event was delivered through the Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Project which is auspiced by the Moira Shire and is also supported by the local government areas of Berrigan, Campaspe, Greater Shepparton and Strathbogie.

The project brings together members of the region's horticulture grower associations, industry, Agriculture Victoria, government agencies and community service clubs to instil the level of individual ownership that is necessary to control QFF habitat on both private and public lands in the GMV.

The Victorian Government's Managing Fruit Fly Regional Grants Program has provided the funding for the undertaking of QFF programs and actions in Victoria.

For more information on the area wide management of QFF visit [www.gmv-qldfruitfly.com.au](http://www.gmv-qldfruitfly.com.au) or like and follow us on Facebook.

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