



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media Release

19 February 2018

Outbreak of the Oriental fruit fly (OFF) in the Grabouw area, Western Cape Province

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) hereby makes an announcement on the recent detection of the Oriental fruit fly in the Grabouw, Western Cape Province. The Oriental Fruit Fly is an exotic fruit fly native to Asia, previously described from Africa as the Invader fruit fly (*Bactrocera invadens*).

On 31 January 2018 one male specimen was detected in the Grabouw area in the Western Cape in a protein baited trap. The trap was serviced by FruitFly Africa who immediately reported it to DAFF. The identification of the specimen was confirmed by a fruit fly specialist on 1 February 2018. On 6 February 2018 a female specimen of the OFF was detected in the same trap as the first detection and the identification was confirmed by a fruit fly specialist on the same day. Final confirmation of the identification of the specimens was made by means of PCR analysis.

A quarantine area of a 5km radius from the detection point was established after the first detection and a delimiting survey was initiated on 2 February 2018. Growers, packing and processing facilities of host material have been placed under quarantine and eradication initiated in a 25km² area surrounding the detection point. Growers within the eradication area will have to apply for permits to remove produce for packing or to move produce outside the area subject to phytosanitary conditions.

On 14 February 2018, a third specimen was detected in a methyl eugenol baited trap approximately 6km from the first detection point close to Grabouw.

The commercial fruit at threat include mango, guava, citrus, papaya, apple, pear, apricot, peach, pear, cherry, grapes, passion fruit, pepper, tomato and cucurbits. This pest can result in food insecurity, yield reduction, job losses, market restrictions and high production and post-harvest costs, if not effectively controlled.

This pest can be controlled by practicing effective orchard/field sanitation, chemical control [Male Annihilation (MAT) blocks and protein bait stations or protein bait sprays] and regulation of the removal of host material from quarantine (infested) areas to non-quarantine (non-infested) areas.

As part of the official control mechanism, community members and farmers are reminded not to remove fruit from quarantine areas to non-quarantine areas without first receiving a removal permit which is obtainable from the DAFF in terms of the Control Measures R.110 of the Agricultural Pests Act, 1983 (Act No. 36 of 1983).

All traders and transporters of fruit and vegetables that are hosts of the OFF must be in possession of a removal permit or a copy of a valid removal permit if fruit from infested areas (Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Gauteng and some parts of Kwa Zulu-Natal) are removed or destined to be sold in the OFF pest free areas (Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State and parts of KwaZulu-Natal). International travelers are advised to avoid illegal importation of agricultural commodities into South Africa because this may lead to the introduction of new pests and diseases which are expensive and difficult to manage.

Please do not remove the fruit-fly trapping buckets placed along roadsides in production areas and other public areas. Their presence is essential to the national exotic fruit fly surveillance programme. People in all provinces producing the host crops of this pest are advised to stay alert and practice the stipulated control measures.

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