

WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

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OLIVE FRUIT FLY UPDATE

Olive Fruit Fly (OLFF), first detected in California in 1998, and Sonoma County in 2001 is here to stay. Sonoma County Agricultural Biologists have been monitoring two different sites, Rincon Valley and Healdsburg, for OLFF presence since April of this year. Using "McPhail" insect traps baited with yeast tablets it has not been uncommon to capture over one hundred OLFF per trap/week at these locations. Our Biologist has also been collecting weather data at the two trap sites in the county. Information from the weather stations, along with flies collected, are sent to a Post Graduate Student at UC Davis where she studies development of the females throughout the season. Eventually, information compiled by the student will be modeled to give growers information on the best time to apply controls for protection of your olive fruit.

In the meantime, it is important that some protective measures be taken to protect your fruit. Without administering some control measure, dependent on location in the county, one can expect up to 100% damage to the crop. As mentioned earlier, as models are created for our county we may be able to provide precise data on when to start your control program. Until then, it appears the sooner in the season you start your control program the better. Initial information suggested starting your control program when pit hardening occurred. However, after talking to several olive growers in our county, it seems the best time to start should be no later than the beginning of July.

There are several control measures one can take, dependent on whether you're a commercial or backyard grower. So far, the most popular control for commercial growers is GF-120

Naturalyte (Spinosad). GF-120 is available for commercial use only through a special exemption in the State of California. This product is treated the same as a restricted material and requires a 24 hour notice of intent before use. If you have an existing restricted materials permit this product can easily be added. If you do not have a restricted materials permit, and you are a commercial grower of olives, you can take a test administered at our office to get your Private Applicators Certificate (PAC) and spray permit which will allow you to purchase this product. There are also several other products available, each with advantages and disadvantages. Some of these products are available for backyard use.

For more information, you can contact our office (707) 565-2371, the UC Cooperative Extension (707) 565-2621, or a local pesticide dealer.

FIELD FUMIGATIONS

North district Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Stefan Parnay and his team have completed 34 pre-site monitoring inspections for field fumigations. The inspections began in June, and the last inspection was completed on November 7. There are two fumigants used for pre-planting, Telone and Methyl Bromide. We inspect each site prior to allowing the fumigation to take place. The applicator is

required to submit to us a notice of intent 48 hours prior to the application. This allows us time to access any sensitive sites near the application and to confirm that buffer zones are of the required distances from occupied structures. Buffer distances are different for each of the two chemicals.

Of the 34 pre-site inspections, 28 were for Telone applications, and 6 were for Methyl Bromide applications. In addition, to the pre-site inspections, we perform use-monitoring inspections on a percentage of the actual applications.

Deputy Parnay has kept statistics on how many fumigation applications have been performed over the past several years. The fumigations performed in the last few years is as follows based on fiscal year calendar:

2002-2003-44

2001-2002-67

2000-2001-83

1999-2000-95

1998-1999-72

1997-1998-90

There continues to be a downward trend in the number of fumigations done in the past few years. This trend is related to both the downturn in the economy, and growers using less toxic materials in their vineyards.

EXOTIC INSECT PEST DETECTION TRAPPING 2003

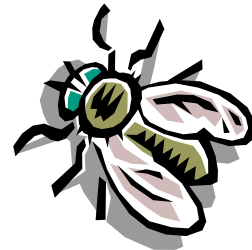
Our detection trappers finished their trapping season on October 31. Biologist Pete Albers, who oversees the program, reports that no exotic insect pests were trapped this season. Due to the budget situation, permanent staff was responsible for monitoring all the detection traps this year. In addition to Mr. Albers, Senior Biologists Priscilla Lane and Bruce McArthur, and Biologists Alex McVicker and Gary Bjork have been monitoring the traps, since April 1.

The trappers place insect traps county-wide for the detection of exotic insect pests which

include: Mediterranean Fruit Fly, Oriental Fruit Fly, Melon Fly, Gypsy Moth, and Japanese Beetle. Mr. Albers reports that there were 1,245 traps placed that were serviced every two weeks.

In addition to these traps, there were 148 McPhail traps deployed that needed to be serviced every week. The McPhail traps are a less specific type of trap and will attract many different types of flies. McPhail traps use a yeast attractant in a large jar to attract fruit flies. The flies are attracted and become trapped in water in the trap. When servicing the traps the biologists strain the water and check for evidence of any fruit flies.

Most of the fruit fly traps have to be relocated every six weeks so that the trap will be in the most desirable host to attract the fruit flies. The Gypsy Moth traps are placed on the trunks of trees that would be a food source for the Gypsy Moth. Japanese Beetle traps need to be placed near turf, roses, and the site needs to have sun exposure during the day. In order to ensure the maximum effectiveness the traps must be properly placed. In order to do this, the trappers need to be knowledgeable on the insect lifecycle and which host plants to use.



Trapping for exotic insects can be a hot, sticky, and smelly job, so we congratulate and thank the trappers on a job well done. Also, thank you to all the members of the public that allowed us access to their property so that we could protect Sonoma County from exotic insect pests.