

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Oriental Fruit Fly Found in Tracy

San Joaquin County – On October 14, 2019, an Agricultural Program Aide from the San Joaquin County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office detected one Oriental fruit fly (OFF) in an insect trap located in Tracy.

On October 15, 2019, insect traps that are specifically designed to detect Oriental fruit fly were deployed to determine if additional Oriental fruit flies are within an 81 square mile delimitation area around the detection site. The delimitation is being performed by the California Department of Food and Agricultural (CDFA) Pest Detection staff.

On October 16, 2019, the CDFA staff notified the Agricultural Commissioner that a second OFF had been detected. As a result, efforts will begin this week to add additional delimitation traps and prepare for treatment in the core square mile, using a bait commonly used in organic production.

“Oriental fruit fly is a serious threat to our local agricultural crops and urban gardens,” said Agricultural Commissioner Tim Pelican. “We must move quickly and take action before the pest can cause widespread damage.”

Oriental fruit fly is not established anywhere on the mainland of the United States. The fruit fly is widespread throughout much of the mainland of Southern Asia and neighboring islands including Sri Lanka and Taiwan. It is also found in Hawaii.

The Oriental fruit fly is known to target over 230 different fruits, vegetables and other plant commodities. Damage occurs when the female lays eggs inside the fruit. The eggs hatch into maggots that tunnel through the flesh of the fruit, making it unfit for consumption.

If the Oriental fruit fly becomes established in California, backyard trees and commercial crops would soon become infested resulting in a federal quarantine on most California produce, higher prices for fruit, maggoty fruit for the home gardener and shopper, and increased use of pesticides.

While fruit flies and other pests threaten California’s crops, the vast majority of them are detected in urban and suburban areas. The most common pathway for these pests to enter the state is by “hitchhiking” in fruits and vegetables brought back illegally by travelers as they return from infested regions around the world.

More information on Oriental fruit fly can be found on CDFA's website at:
https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/PDEP/treatment/oriental_ff.html

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