

Home & Garden Pest Newsletter

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Don't Move Homegrown Fruit and Vegetables in Fruit Fly Quarantine Zones

Seven invasive fruit fly quarantines are in place throughout California. If you live within one of these quarantine zones, fruits and vegetables should not be moved off the property they were grown on. Quarantines are in place for the Mediterranean fruit fly, Oriental fruit fly, tau fruit fly, and Queensland fruit fly. Smuggled, illegally imported fruit is the most common pathway of fruit fly entry into California.

These fruit flies lay their eggs under the skin of many crops, making their detection difficult. Females of some species can lay 1,000 eggs in their lifetime. Once eggs hatch, larvae (maggots) feed on the inside of the fruit. Infested fruit drops to the ground where larvae leave the fruit to burrow into the soil to pupate. Numerous generations can occur each year.

Invasive fruit flies pose a major threat to California agriculture as they make fruit unfit for human consumption and damage a wide variety of crops from fruits to vegetables. In addition, they pose an economic burden to commercial growers in quarantine zones as they must treat all host fruit with an approved pesticide before sale or movement within or outside of the quarantine area.

You can help prevent the spread of these invasive pests and reduce the risks they pose to commercial fruit and vegetable producers by



Ripe pomegranate fruit, one of the many fruits susceptible to invasive fruit fly infestation.




M Hakim



Mediterranean fruit fly larvae feeding in an orange fruit.

FL Dept Ag, Bugwood.org

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Don't Move Homegrown Produce continued from p. 1

not moving homegrown produce and cleaning up and disposing of dropped fruit.

Quarantine zones include:

Mediterranean fruit fly:

- * Los Angeles County, Leimert Park Area

Oriental fruit fly:

- * San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, Highland, Redlands, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Yucaipa Areas
- * Sacramento County, Rancho Cordova Area
- * Contra Costa County, Brentwood Area
- * Santa Clara County, Santa Clara Area

Tau fly:

- * Los Angeles County, Stevenson Ranch, Valencia, Santa Clarita Areas

Queensland fruit fly:

- * Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, Thousand Oaks Area

*Quarantine zones updated December 5, 2023.

To view the most up-to-date quarantine maps, visit the CDFA webpage at cdfa.ca.gov/plant/pe/InteriorExclusion/quarantine.html.

If you live in a fruit fly quarantine zone:

- * Do not take fresh fruits and vegetables off your property. Don't share with neighbors or ship to friends and family in other counties or states.
- * Consume or process (i.e., juice, freeze, or cook) all fruits and vegetables where they are grown.
- * Dispose of fresh fruits and vegetables by double-bagging and sealing then placing them in the trash—not in your green waste or compost bin.

Suspect you have an invasive fruit fly infestation?

Contact the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Pest Hotline: 1-800-491-1899 or your County Agricultural Commissioner cdfa.ca.gov/exec/county/countymap/.

Allow authorized CDFA workers access to your property to inspect fruit, set traps, or conduct fruit fly eradication activities. Your cooperation helps protect California agriculture.

While the holiday season is a time of giving, we urge you to not share these invasive fruit flies!

—Lauren Fordyce,
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2024 Urban & Community IPM Webinars

The UC Statewide IPM Program Urban and Community Webinar series will continue in 2024 with presentations on pest identification, prevention, and management, all presented by experts in the field.

The webinar series is free and open to the public but advanced registration is required. See ucanr.edu/sites/ucipm-community-webinars/ for details and to register.

Join us at noon on the third Thursday of every month.

Upcoming Webinars in 2024:

January 18: Peach Leaf Curl & Springtime Tree Diseases

February 15: Controlling Springtime Weeds

March 21: Insect Egg Identification (Easter egg hunt!)

April 18: Mosquitoes & Ticks of Public Health Concern

May 16: Moles, Voles & Gophers!

June 20: Flea Control & Diseases: Starting from Scratch



Winter Invaders!

During the holiday season, the only creatures you want stirring in your home are your family, friends, and pets. But as temperatures drop, and the rain returns, some pests may seek shelter indoors with you. Rats and mice can be problems all year but in the cold weather, they prefer the warmth of your home to being outdoors and you might see more in your home.

Pests invade homes for varying reasons during autumn and winter. Common outdoor species such as Argentine ants, Oriental (or Turkestan) cockroaches, sowbugs and pillbugs, springtails, and earwigs, may simply be escaping harsh conditions such as freezing temperatures or small-scale flooding. Some insects, especially true bugs (Hemiptera); such as boxelder bug, bordered plant bug, milkweed bug and other seed bugs, false chinch bug, and various stink bugs, naturally seek out dry, protected cracks and crevices to spend the winter. In the landscape, such sites may be beneath loose tree bark or deep within firewood piles, but structural gaps, cracks and crevices may be warmer, drier, and more attractive to these overwintering bugs.

It's generally easier to keep pests out before they become a problem than to try and get rid of them once they infest your home. Exclude pests by sealing up possible entry points around doors, windows, foundations, chimneys, roof joints, shingles, and vents. Install door sweeps and threshold seals to get rid of gaps under and around doors. If you have gaps around windows, you can close them with weather stripping and expanding foam or install new screens.

Clean up the landscape around your home so pests have fewer places to live and breed. Move wood chips and other organic mulches, and firewood piles away from your home's perimeter and entryways. Drain any excess moisture near structural foundations and entryways.

If you spot nuisance pests like boxelder bugs, earwigs, springtails, and centipedes indoors, they can be simply swept up, vacuumed, or taken outside. Other pests like mice and rats need to be dealt with differently.



Adult earwig on the threshold of a door.

RD Wallace, U GA, Bugwood.org

Ideally, mice and rats should be managed before they get inside. Check the exterior of your home for signs of a mice or rat infestation including droppings, gnaw marks, feeding damage, and rub marks. For mice and rats, tight fitting lids on garbage cans and compost containers will keep these rodents from finding a food source near your home and eventually coming indoors. Thin vegetation between shrubs and buildings and trim back overhanging trees. Roof rats will use climbing vegetation to scale buildings and seek shelter. Seal any cracks or gaps into your home that are larger than ¼ inch. Screen or block potential entrances under eaves or overlapping roof sections. Use sheet metal or ½-inch wire hardware cloth to keep out mice and rats since rodents can gnaw through softer material like plastic or wood.

Snap traps are the safest, most effective, and most economical way to manage rats and mice. You can place traps outside the home to catch rodents before they enter. You can also place them inside if you spot signs of them there. Be sure to use the correct-sized traps and place them in secluded areas along walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and in places where droppings have been found.

Keep pests from ruining your holiday fun by denying them food, water, and shelter in your home. For more details about specific pests and their management, see our website.

ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/menu.homegarden.html

—Belinda Messenger-Sikes,
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Invasive Pest Spotlight: Oriental Fruit Fly

The invasive pest spotlight focuses on emerging or potential invasive pests in California. In this issue we are covering the Oriental fruit fly (OFF).

Oriental Fruit Fly Facts

The Oriental fruit fly (OFF) is an invasive pest that attacks over 230 crops including citrus and other fruits, nuts, vegetables, and berries. The short life cycle of the OFF allows rapid development of serious outbreaks, which can cause severe economic losses. Heavy infestations can cause complete losses of crops. Fruit that has been attacked may be unfit to eat as larvae tunnel through the flesh as they feed. Fungi and bacteria enter, leaving the interior of the fruit a rotten mass. Infested fruit does not always look damaged from the outside but may take on a brown, mottled appearance as the maggots feed.

The adult OFF is slightly larger than a housefly, around 1/3 inch (8mm) in length. The body color is often bright yellow with a dark “T” shaped marking on the abdomen. The wings are clear. The female has a pointed slender ovipositor to deposit eggs under the skin of host fruit. A single female can lay more than 1,000 eggs in her lifetime. The fly can infest new areas very quickly because it is a strong flyer and can travel 30 miles in search of food and sites to lay eggs.

What can you do?

The Oriental fruit fly is a major pest of agriculture in Hawaii and efforts to prevent its establishment into California are ongoing. Areas where OFF have been detected are under quarantine. If you are in a quarantine area, you can help by controlling the movement of your homegrown fruit off your property and by disposing of infected fruit in the garbage, not in green waste or compost. If you



A female Oriental fruit fly laying eggs on a mango.



Grapefruit infested with larvae of oriental fruit fly.

see the OFF, notify your County Agricultural Commissioner's office or call the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899.

—Belinda Messenger-Sikes,
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For more information about managing pests, contact your University of California Cooperative Extension office, or visit the UC IPM website at ipm.ucanr.edu.

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