Questions and Answers

2025 European Cherry Fruit Fly Survey in New York

What is the European cherry fruit fly (ECFF), and why is it a threat?

ECFF (*Rhagoletis cerasi L.*) is a serious pest of cherries. The fly damages ripening fruit, causing it to rot and fall off the tree. In heavily infested areas, the fly can destroy all ripening cherries if left uncontrolled. The pest can spread to new areas through the transport of infested fresh cherries, soil, or fruit from host plants. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) first found European cherry fruit fly on traps hung along the Niagara River in New York's Niagara County in 2017.

What is the ECFF survey?

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and New York's State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYS AGM) will hang approximately 2,000 traps across Western and Central New York, which is under quarantine for ECFF. APHIS will also hang traps outside the ECFF quarantine in areas that are at higher risk for the pest's spread.

What do the traps look like?

The yellow panel trap is a rectangular cardboard trap coated on both sides with a mixture of a nontoxic glue and a food bait. The traps are about 9 inches long and hang vertically in trees.

Do the traps really catch the fruit flies?

The trap helps detect new infestations and monitors the insect's spread. It is not meant to catch fruit flies to reduce populations.

How do the traps work?

Adult fruit flies are attracted to the ammonium acetate food bait that's on the trap. If the flies land on the trap, they will get stuck in the nontoxic glue. APHIS and NYS AGM service the traps at least every 2 weeks to replace the bait and collect insects.

If a trap is in my area, does that mean ECFF is there?

No. If you see a trap in your community, it does not mean ECFF is present. It just means we are looking for ECFF in your area. The goal of the survey is to determine where the insect is and monitor its spread.

What were the results of the 2024 survey in New York?

The 2024 survey found 78 ECFF in 21 trap locations. These results helped guide decisions on trap placement for the 2025 survey.

Where will traps be set this year?

For the 2025 season, surveyors will place traps along the edge of the quarantined areas in Western and Central New York**.** APHIS will also hang traps in selected areas in Michigan and Pennsylvania.

How can I help?

Please allow APHIS and NYS AGM surveyors access to your property to place and check traps. Residents with questions can contact the ECFF program office by calling 1-800-249-2363 or emailing ppq.ecff@usda.gov. Learn more at www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-pests-diseases/ecff.

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