



Premier Jay Weatherill

Treasurer
Minister for State Development
Minister for the Public Sector
Minister for the Arts

Minister Gail Gago

Minister for Agriculture, Food and
Fisheries

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 11am, Thursday, November 7, 2013

New move to retain South Australia's prized fruit fly-free status

The State Government will undertake a pre-emptive strike on fruit fly to ensure that South Australia retains its prized status of being free of the destructive pest.

Premier Jay Weatherill today announced the State Government's Premium Food and Wine policy, which includes a cutting-edge research and development facility in the Upper Spencer Gulf to combat fruit fly.

"Because fruit fly has taken hold so firmly interstate, the threat of South Australia losing its fruit fly free status is becoming greater," Mr Weatherill said.

"Being fruit fly-free is a huge selling point for our premium food and wine producers, which is why we are going to invest in keeping the pest out of our State.

"It is the most damaging fruit and vegetable pest in the world and is costly for producers and consumers.

"Each year the State Government spends about \$5 million keeping fruit fly out of South Australia. This year's State Budget provided an extra \$1 million for fruit fly measures, which will be directed towards the establishment of the facility.

"This means growers and exporters do not need to spend millions of dollars a year to treat fruit they are sending interstate and overseas."

Under the Premium Food and Wine policy, researchers at the new \$3 million facility will develop male-only sterile Queensland fruit flies, known as Q-fly.

The sterile male Q-flies will be used to eradicate outbreaks interstate, where the pest is endemic in many areas, as well as in South Australia if isolated detections are found.

"Sterile insects have been used with great success here and around the world but this will be a first for Q-flies," Mr Weatherill said.

"It will transform the way we manage fruit fly here and interstate."

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**Government of
South Australia**



Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister Gail Gago said sterile insect technology could be used for both prevention and eradication.

“Sterile flies can eradicate remnant fruit fly populations once spraying has been completed and they can also prevent wild flies from establishing in the area where they are released,” Ms Gago said

Another major benefit of the new facility would be the potential for reducing Australia’s reliance on agrichemicals.

“It’s very important that we reduce the environmental risks from using chemicals and also seek to reduce their use to suit our many international trading partners,” Ms Gago said.

“The technology is environmentally friendly and can be used in orchards, urban and environmentally-sensitive areas, where conventional chemical treatment isn’t possible or is intrusive.

“There is also no risk of resistance if repeatedly used, and rapid treatment of large areas can be achieved.”

Ms Gago said work on the new facility would take two years and will begin later this financial year, continuing into 2014-15. The research team will start work in 2014-15.

The State Government will own the facility, while national research and development collaboration will be managed principally through Horticulture Australia Ltd, with \$15 million to be invested by the partners – HAL, the CSIRO Biosecurity Flagship and Plant & Food Research Australia in research over five years.