



No funds for Mypo fruit fly grid

By **Joanne Fosdike**

MYPOLONGA'S fruit growers will not receive Government help to get a fruit fly trapping grid working again, despite a fruit fly from Queensland being found in the area in July.

Government assistance was ruled out by State Agriculture Minister Gail Gago during a meeting of the Legislative Council last week.

Ms Gago said it had always been up to the Mypolonga industry to fund the grid with in-kind support from PIRSA, and was not something the Government had or would budget for.

"Indeed, the funding for the Mypolonga fruit fly trapping grid, which has existed since 1991, has recently been ceased," she said.

"This has potential marketing implications for local growers, particularly in accessing processing and packing facilities in the Riverland fruit fly exclusion zone.

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“There is no provision in the current budgets for PIRSA to take on more responsibility for the Mypolonga fruit fly trapping grid.

“It is estimated that PIRSA’s annual contribution to the Mypolonga fruit fly trapping grid is worth in the order of around \$7000 and it is estimated that the cost to industry of maintaining the trapping grid would be in the order of somewhere between \$15,000 to \$20,000, with around 80 per cent of that cost supporting the employment of a trapping grid inspector.”

Ms Gago said if the industry came up with the money, PIRSA would continue their support.

“The trapping grid is obviously a very important measure in helping to maintain our status as the only jurisdiction to be fruit fly free in terms of being a mainland state,” she said.

“It complements other government measures to prevent fruit fly incursions, which include static and mobile quarantine stations, an extensive community awareness campaign and obviously regulatory

control over the movement of host materials.

Ms Gago said the Mypolonga fruit fly trapping grid was the only one in South Australia to be funded by industry, with PIRSA providing in-kind support.

Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick said he was disappointed by the Government’s lack of

support for the Mypolonga horticulture industry.

“Mypolonga is geographically important to the Riverland horticulture industry, and metropolitan growers, yet the Minister continues to leave the local horticulture industry hanging,” he said.

“I acknowledge PIRSA’s in-kind support for technical advice and assistance, however this is pointless without providing funding to support the employment of a trapping grid inspector.”

Mr Pederick said he was concerned about the detection of a male Queensland fruit fly in the Mypolonga area earlier this year.

“The true value of having a fruit fly trapping grid in Mypolonga

was fully realised in the recent detection of the male fruit fly,” he said.

“However, this Government decision will leave local growers susceptible to further fruit fly detections and a potential devastating outbreak.

“\$321.9 million of South Australia’s annual horticultural produce is vulnerable to fruit fly infestation.

“If an outbreak happens, the entire State’s horticulture industry is at risk and the

Government will have no one else to blame except themselves.”

Ms Gago said the single male Queensland fruit fly was detected in a permanent trap in the Mypolonga area but “it was just the one male fruit fly”.

“PIRSA ensured that

additional and supplementary traps were set up within 200 metres of that detection zone after the fly was detected,” she said.

“Additional traps were also installed to increase

trapping intensity from one trap per square kilometre to one trap every 400 square metres within 1.5 kilometres of the detection.

“They were very thorough in mapping out a grid around that zone to make sure that we

were able to monitor any other incursions, and I am pleased to report that no other fruit flies were found.

In total, an additional 38 traps were deployed and they remained in place for nine weeks.”