

# Growers defeated in Parliament

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A BID to add Mypologna to South Australia's fruit fly exclusion zone has failed.

Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick tried to put the idea to a vote in State Parliament last week, but a government MIP altered the wording of his proposal, rendering it almost unrecognisable and completely toothless.

Mr Pederick had asked MPs to "establish Mypologna as a fruit fly exclusion zone and commit extra funding to biosecurity measures".

Instead the amended motion, which passed after a 21-17 vote, called for the government to "recognise the importance of the Mypologna fruit fly trapping grid and the other important measures the government uses".

Mr Pederick said growers were burdened by the \$20,000 annual cost of maintaining traps at 17 locations around Mypologna, a measure intended to detect fruit flies before they could breed and threaten the district's horticultural industry.

"It is clear that Mypologna is geographically important to the Riverland horticultural industry and metropolitan growers, yet we still have a Government that continues to leave the Mypologna horticulture industry dangling," he said.

"Unless the Mypologna area is brought into the fruit fly exclusion zone, we could have an outbreak sooner rather than later."

He said the district could also miss out on export opportunities due to its non-inclusion in the Riverland zone.

Member for Chaffey Tim Whetstone, that region's representative, agreed.

"Too often we hear the Premier, the Agriculture Minister, the Trade Minister - every politician in this place - talking about opportunities and how our export economy is going to be one of the saviours of the South Australian economy," he said.

"Yet we see the Government do little about supporting it, little about just putting in some extra funding to make sure that this vital piece of international acknowledgement is upheld.

"Much of (Mypologna's produce) does travel to the Riverland to be processed, to be packed and then put into a logistic chain so that it is sent off to markets, sent off to ports and sent off to the airport for our international markets."

But Labor MP Jon Gee said the Government's current efforts were sufficient, and his colleagues used their superior numbers to defeat the proposal.

The State Government spends about \$5 million per year maintaining the official fruit fly exclusion zone in the Riverland.

About 15 orchardists grow 100 hectares of citrus fruit at Mypologna.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government and Plant Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre have launched a new plan for enhancing Australia's fruit fly management strategy.

Senator Anne Ruston said the plan would guide research priorities.

"Ultimately this will mean better access to lucrative export markets, more competitive pricing... and improved returns for our growers," she said.

## Meningie celebrates with nonagenarian

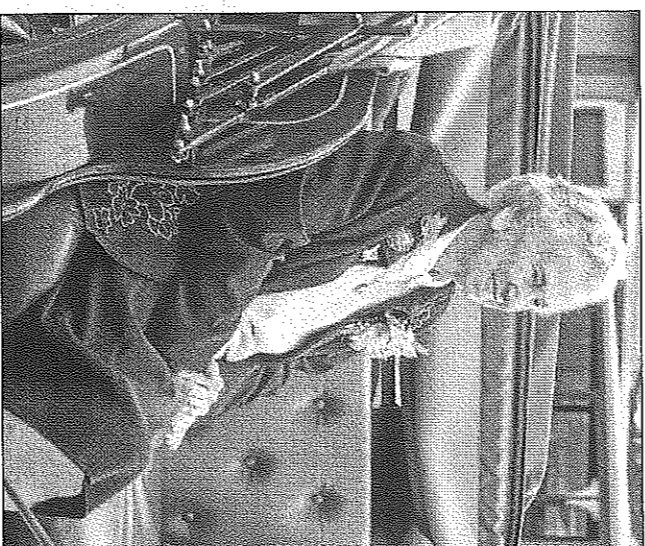
Maud French, of Meningie, celebrated her 90th birthday with about 130 family and friends in style on Sunday, June 14.

Guests gathered at the United Church in Meningie, travelling from as far away as New Zealand, Western Australia and the Riverland and awaited the guest of honour's arrival.

Mrs French, pictured left, has always had a love of horses and was recently heard to say that she would love to ride a horse again.

With this in mind, the family organised for a horse and carriage to pick her up, take a tour of Meningie and transport her to the celebration.

The smile could not be wiped from her face as she made her grand entrance.



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From page 1

The council would spend a similar amount. Cr Tod Cusack did not need to think twice about the offer.

"I'm really excited about this," he said. "We've had quite a few concepts drawn up over the years - let's make sure this is the last one."

"The public is probably saying 'oh yeah, another talk-fest' - let's get something done."

- Details: For the agenda of Monday's special council meeting contact the council.

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