

# Contents



In my last post I talked about the particular summer we have been having. So hot and practically no rain for the entire summer. Amongst other things this led to a bumper crop of apricots. We didn't have hardly any last year and over the years transport difficulties have escalated making the sale of apricots and other stonefruit (with the possible exception of cherries ) difficult. As you can see a lot of the fruit dropped not just because we didn't pick it but as a result of the drought and windy days.

My good friend Alan Savins identified fruit fly as a major threat to Tasmania many years ago. His prophecy at the time was ignored but now it has happened. Fortunately fruit fly checks have been going on for some time and the growers are aware it has entered the State.



Which one is it: global warming or a one off hotter than normal summer. Does it matter? What does matter is the potential for wiping out the horticultural industry as we see it today. What happened to me this summer means fruit fly would have a great source of food and possibly spread like wire fire. (another threat to farming on the east coast).

My management practices will have to change. Many of my trees will have to be cut down so that fruit droppings are minimised. Throwing out unused fruit to the animals will have to be assessed too. What do we do with waste fruit and general management practices need to be reassessed. Tasmania has been the lucky state horticulturally but those days look like coming to an end. Large scale producers relying on an export market must feel severely threatened. the spread of fruit fly has been stopped in the past probably by the cold winters we normally enjoy. But a hot summer followed by

warmer winters creates a completely new scenario.

Backyard gardeners could be the avenue by which the spread of this terrible menace will be unconstrained. Likewise greenhouses create a warmer environment by which fruit fly can overwinter and survive to do more damage in the summer months.

Fruit fly control measures haven't really stopped the southerly movement through Australia. Sterilisation of the mail fruit fly has helped and of course Bass strait has been a very useful Quarantine barrier but we can see now that it may not be good enough.

Yes I am worried. Fruit fly getting into Tasmania is a major threat to all gardeners and measures to control it should be made transparent and immediate implemented.