

Questions and Answers: 2021 European Cherry Fruit Fly Survey in New York

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

The European cherry fruit fly (*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?

The ECFF survey is a joint effort by USDA and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYS AGM) to look for this invasive pest in affected and at-risk areas. The goal of the survey is to determine where the insect is and monitor for potential spread. We survey for ECFF each year in the spring and summer.

Where will traps be set this year?

For the 2021 season, we are placing about 2,000 traps across the Western and Central New York regions, which are under quarantine for ECFF. We are also placing traps in New York counties outside the quarantine area that are most at risk for ECFF's spread.

What do the traps look like?

We use the yellow panel trap, 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 monitor the insect's spread. They are not meant to catch fruit flies as a way to reduce populations.

What is the bait?

The attractant is a food additive called ammonium acetate that lures fruit flies to the coated yellow trap.



How do the traps work?

Adult fruit flies are attracted to the baited trap. If the flies land on the trap, they will get stuck in the nontoxic glue. USDA and NYS AGM service the traps regularly 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.

What were the results of the 2020 survey in New York?

Our 2020 survey in Niagara, Orleans, and Monroe counties found more than 1,100 ECFF in over 100 trap locations. These results helped guide decisions on trap placement for the 2021 survey.

How can I help?

Allow USDA and NYS AGM surveyors access to your property to place and check traps. If you have any questions, call the ECFF program office at 1-800-249-2363 or email us at ppq.ecff@usda.gov.

Learn more at www.aphis.usda.gov/hungrypests/ecff.