Help to combat the invader fruit fly (*Bactrocera invadens*)

The invader fruit fly (*Bactrocera invadens*) is an exotic fruit fly originating from Asia and is currently invading Africa, causing severe damage to host fruit and vegetables such as mangoes, guavas, citrus, marula, wild figs, peppers, pumpkins, watermelons and tomatoes. The pest can result in food insecurity, yield reduction, job losses, market restrictions and high production and post-harvest costs, if not effectively controlled.

This pest has been declared as present in the Vhembe district of Limpopo, where it is under official control. Its occurrence in parts of Limpopo (Waterberg, Capricorn, Mopani and Greater Sekhukhune districts), North West (Ngaka Modiri Molema district), KwaZulu-Natal (uThungulu and uMkhanyakude districts), Mpumalanga (Ehlanzeni district) and the Northern Cape (Francis Baard and Siyanda) is currently regarded as transient and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) is conducting eradication procedures in those areas. This pest has the potential to spread quickly from one area to another and this is a critical concern to DAFF, given the risk of economic damage it poses to the agricultural sector.

This pest can be controlled by practicing effective orchard/field sanitation, chemical control and control of the removal of host material from quarantine (infested) areas to non-quarantine (non-infested) areas. Orchard sanitation is the collection of all fallen and rotten fruit/fruiting vegetables, burying them in a pit or trench and covering with half a metre of soil, or placing them into a black refuse bag, closing it and exposing it to the
sun. In terms of chemical control, Male Annihilation (MAT) blocks and protein bait stations such as M3s or protein bait sprays can be applied. People are encouraged not to remove fruit from quarantine areas to non-quarantine areas without first receiving a removal permit in terms of regulation R110 of the Agricultural Pests Act, 1983 (Act No. 36 of 1983).

Farmers and community members are advised to clear away (bag or bury) unwanted fruit in home gardens and on farms, apply chemical control and to avoid moving fruit from quarantine areas to non-quarantine areas. International travellers are advised to avoid illegal importation of agricultural commodities into South Africa because this may lead to the introduction of new pests and diseases which are expensive and difficult to manage.

Please do not remove the fruit-fly trapping buckets placed along roadsides, in production areas and other public areas. Their presence is essential to the national exotic fruit fly surveillance programme. All provinces producing the host crops of this pest are advised to stay alert and practice the stipulated preventative control measures.

**For further information and media enquiries please contact:**

Ms Makenosi Maroo  
Chief Director: Stakeholder Relations and Communications  
Tel.: 012 319 6787  
Cell: 072 475 2956  
E-mail: MakenosiM@daff.gov.za