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Press release: Fruit Fly in Hazelwood Park Area

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE PREMIER OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, MR. DUNSTAN.

6.6.72

Householders in the Hazelwood Park fruit fly quarantine area were urged today to co-operate with the eradication programme.

The Premier, Mr. Dunstan, said today an anonymous leaflet advocating non-compliance was being circulated in the area.

"However, it contains information which is not soundly based on the full facts of the present situation," he said.

"It is vitally important that South Australia be kept free of fruit fly, and we cannot achieve this goal unless we have full-scale co-operation from all the people in the affected area".

The Premier said the leaflets claim that the present methods of eradication are outdated and have not been changed for 25 years was quite untrue.

"The Department of Agriculture constantly reviews and re-assesses its whole eradication programme".

"Departmental officers have recently visited South Africa, Israel and the United States to ensure that South Australia is fully conversant with the latest technical developments", he said.

Recent changes to the programme include:

- The discontinuance of the use of DDT in fruit fly sprays.
- Restricting spraying and baiting to a smaller area.
- The use of luretraps as a means of detecting outbreaks earlier.
- Modification of the programme to deal with Queensland fruit fly and Mediterranean fruit fly separately.

"The suggestion that the sterile male technique would be a more effective alternative to eradicating fruit fly is not borne out by practical experience", Mr. Dunstan commented.

"The introduction of such a technique is fraught with considerable dangers. It involves precise and costly techniques which under South Australian conditions cannot be guaranteed to be one hundred percent effective.

"In any number of released sterile male fruit flies it only needs a few to be released which are not totally sterile and South Australia's position as a fruit fly free State would be in jeopardy".

"The Government is confident that the present eradication programme carried out by the Department of Agriculture is the most appropriate and suitable for South Australian conditions".

"Over the years Adelaide householders and commercial orchardists have been saved thousands of tons of fruit and hundreds of millions of dollars, which would have been otherwise lost to the state.

"At present the gross value of the South Australian horticultural industry is about \$70M.

"This industry would be decimated if we lost the fight to keep South Australia free from fruit fly.

"Not only would our commercial orchardists be ruined, but suburban householders would no longer be able to grow and consume clean fruit.

"I hope that responsible citizens in the Hazelwood Park area will ignore the misleading information being circulated to them in the leaflet", the Premier said.

"If any citizen has doubts or queries about the present eradication programme he should contact the Department of Agriculture immediately.

"The Department is happy to advise householders about the present methods of eradication and is willing to receive any suggestions on how the present programme can be improved".

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