

# Protein Bait Spray

Adding Bait Sprays to Qfly management  
To produce clean, marketable fruit



## What is a bait spray?

A bait spray consists of a protein source (such as a yeast autolysate) and an insecticide. The sprays can be strategically commenced to match the emergence of flies after winter, and to protect ripening berries as they become more susceptible to Qfly attack. The advantage of bait spray is that it is a targeted spray with minimal effect on non-target organisms such as beneficial insects.

## How does it work?

Bait sprays attract and kill Qfly. Both male and female Qfly need protein in order to sexually mature. Female flies are especially attracted to the protein during maturation and egg development, and when feeding on the protein come in contact with the insecticide.

## How is it applied?

Generally bait sprays are applied to the trunk or foliage of trees (where the Qfly is likely to be active) but in berry crops bait sprays can be applied as a series of spot or strip sprays to the upper part of a trellis, using a jet stream nozzle for example. Sprays should avoid contacting fruit, preventing any residue concerns and any fruit damage. Follow the recommendations on the label, and record any sprays. The activity of bait sprays is generally short lived, especially during periods of high temperatures or rainfall. Repeat applications may be required in this case. Frequency of sprays can be adjusted according to risk.

Recommendations usually prescribe application for 6-8 weeks prior to harvest to protect maturing fruit, but best results for managing the pest are achieved when bait applications commence early in the season (matching the first emergence of Qfly) and when applications are consistent. Orchards may be neighbouring other crops that mature earlier, or an urban setting where there are early hosts and where flies are active earlier. Look around, monitor and make sure you manage proactively before any flies move in.

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## Tips for success

- Apply early in the morning - when Qfly is likely to feed
- Optimum results when used alongside MAT and hygiene
- Consistency is key – try not to miss an application
- Cover the entire block (and surrounds) - Qfly are mobile
- Reapply after hot weather or rain
- Do not apply on the ground
- Adding gels or thickeners might improve longevity



Protein bait spot spray on trellis post, and spray application to trunks.  
Photos: P. Measham, Bugsforbugs

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