



By Matthew Jones

Thursday 17th September 2015, 12:04 GMT

Florida calls state of emergency

Agricultural commissioner makes declaration as state fights fruit fly incursion



Florida's agriculture commissioner, Adam Putnam, has declared a state of emergency, as the US state battles its largest fruit fly outbreak on record, according to the Miami Herald.

A total of 158 Asian fruit flies had been trapped by authorities as of Tuesday (15 September), while 8 tonnes of infested fruit has been destroyed.

"Miami-Dade County's agriculture

industry is a US\$1.6bn industry, and we will use every weapon in our arsenal that's necessary to eradicate this pest and protect Florida agriculture and our economy," Putnam was quoted as saying by the Miami Herald.

The USDA's smuggling interdiction team is currently working with the state to find the source of the flies. Authorities were first alerted to the outbreak in early August when a single fly was discovered in an almond orchard in

Kendall. To this point all detections have been isolated to the Redland area.

Under the emergency declaration, Putnam will have the authority to command additional resources to the response effort, including the use of law enforcement.