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A\$16.9m fruit fly package for Australia

The package will use modern technology to improve alerts and detection of fruit fly



Better-controlling fruit fly across Australia will be the main aim of a A\$16.9m (US\$12.4m) package announced by the Australian Department of Agriculture.

The package will be used to invest in new technology, said to give growers advanced warnings of Queensland Fruit Fly movements across the nation.

"We've started a trial of smart-traps that'll send farmers instant alerts if fruit fly is detected," said Australian minister for agriculture, David Littleproud.

"Sensors detect fruit flies in the trap by the way they move and send mobile

alerts to growers. This can provide farmers the best possible information, so they can respond to an outbreak quicker," he noted.

"We're also investing in a national mapping program, to track the movement of Queensland fruit fly in summer. The flies make their way south as it warms up and this will let growers know where they are and help us target where to release our sterile fruit flies."

The appointment of extension officers on the ground will help growers utilise the offerings and help growers implement R&D.

Littleproud touted the new developments as an opportunity to access more premium markets and boost farmgate prices.

"This package will help protect our A\$18b (US\$13b) horticultural industry and reassure our trading partners of the systems we have in place," he said.

The package will offer support to fruit fly areas in WA, the NT, SA and Queensland's East Coast.