The 2003 Persimmon Season
G.T. McQuate

2003 was the third year that the Area-Wide Fruit Fly IPM program has supported Mediterranean fruit fly suppression in persimmon orchards in Kula, Maui. Overall, 2003 was a very good year with several growers reporting “bumper crops.” The overall average estimate of Medfly infestation was less than 3.0%, comparable to the estimate from the first year of the program and well below last year’s estimate of 10.6%. Cercospora leaf spot, which was a major problem last year, was not much of a problem this year as most growers achieved control through sprays. The most common pest problems reported this year were fruit damage by thrips and mealybug and defoliation by rose beetles. Another problem some growers experienced was difficulty in marketing their fruits. With abundant fruits, more effort may be needed to develop new markets. Persimmon growers gathered on January 28, 2004 for the 3rd Annual Persimmon Growers Meeting, which featured a great potluck followed by an overview of the 2003 season and preliminary plans for the 2004 season. At this meeting it was announced that release of sterile medflies are planned to begin by the end of 2004 – a trial of another tool which could help to further suppress the Medfly populations in the persimmon orchards.

Lower Kula Update
E. Fujitani

Unfavorable weather conditions since early December has raised havoc at the farm sites. Growers are experiencing low crop yields, unmarketable produce and an increase in melon fruit fly activity. Area wide crew has noticed an increase of stung fruits as compared to the previous months. Melon fly catch per trap per day (CPTD) is presently at 1.54. Male annihilation trapping and GF-120 bait application sprays should be implemented at scheduled intervals to keep the melon fly in check. Growers that spray GF-120 noticed a decrease in fly activity in the crop and dead flies on the bait spray deposition.

The HAWFLYPM program will be implementing the suppression of Oriental fruit flies starting January. Area wide crew are presently collecting phenology data on host plants at potential sites and will be setting up methyl eugonal traps to catch the male oriental flies in the coming months.

Upper Kula Update
E. Fujitani

Monitoring data of medfly population remain low, averaging below 0.29 CPTD. Growers, community cooperators, and backyard enthusiasts report of a bountiful persimmon season. Many commented that this past season yielded a “bumper crop” of fruits, with infestation levels below 3%. The persimmon growers are presently busy preparing for the coming season by pruning branches, fixing braces, fertilizing and continuing sanitation practices. With yields up this past year, growers are looking at additional marketing outlets. Loquats are in season now; therefore mass trapping and protein bait applications should be implemented in the orchards for continued medfly suppression. Peaches and nectarine trees are at the stages of flowering and fruit set. Last year people had their fill of eating and sharing sting-free peaches, and are hopeful again this year.

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Ha’iku Mahalo Day
L. Fujitani

A steady rain blessed the First Annual Ha’iku Mahalo Day held at the Ha’iku Community Center on November 29, 2003. The event provided a festive atmosphere of local food, music, hula, and keiki activities. Ha’iku Mahalo Day also gave community members the opportunity to “talk story” with their neighbors and political representatives, and learn how programs like HAW-FLYPM can make a positive impact in their community. Guava, a host for the Oriental fruit fly, grows wild along Ha’iku’s winding roads and deep gulches. Fruits and vegetables growing year-round in our warm tropical climate provides an abundance of host plants for fruit flies.

Fruit Flies Find Their Way To Kahikinui
L. Fujitani

Peter Stolle and his wife Stephanie Ahina moved to Kahikinui with plans to live a simple idyllic life. Without water or electricity it took many hours of hard work to transform the barren land into the tropical oasis it is today. They used water catchments to irrigate their banana trees, avocado, papaya, loquat, and citrus trees. However, the drought in recent years made it necessary for Stolle to truck in water for his garden and for his goats. This sort of inconvenience is expected when you live in an undeveloped area like Kahikinui. What Peter did not expect to see was fruit fly stings on his fruits and squash. Peter and Stephanie attended a HAW-FLYPM workshop in October 2002 and began implementing fruit fly suppression techniques. The Biolure®, male attractants, and regular application of GF-120 “really made a difference.” “I am happy with the fruit fly program,” says Peter. “Before the citrus was full of stings.” New flies continue to come in over the mountains but their population will be under control as the Stolles continue their HAWFLY-PM fruit fly suppression techniques.

Maui County Fair Winner
L. Fujitani

“Not one single fruit fly,” boasts Aaron Burkert. To control the fruit flies in his backyard garden, Aaron uses cuelure traps and sprays GF-120 along his borders. Burkert’s prize winning pumpkin weighed 211 pounds while his watermelon was 110 pounds. The horticultural exhibits showcase locally grown fruits, vegetables, and flowers and has been a Maui County Fair tradition for years.

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