

The Mediterranean fly sanitary eradication actions protect approximately 1.9 million hectares of fruit and vegetable crops

This work developed by the National Service for Agro-Alimentary Public Health, Safety and Quality (Senasica) has a positive impact on a productive sector with a commercial value over 189,470 million Mexican pesos.



The National Service for Agro-Alimentary Public Health, Safety and Quality (Senasica) reported that the actions carried out domestically to contain the Mediterranean fly protect approximately 1.9 million hectares of fruit and vegetable crops with a value over 189,470 million Mexican pesos.

Today, the Senasica announced that the producers and the government of Colima have joined the works started in early April by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development to contain the Mediterranean fly (*Ceratitis capitata*, Wiedemann) outbreak located in Manzanillo and Armeria, Colima.

Further, the agency explained that the detection of the outbreak was the result of the daily actions implemented throughout the country, through preventive trap-based monitoring carried out by Phytosanitary Epidemiological Surveillance National System (SINAVEF, in Spanish).

In the State of Colima an agricultural production of approximately 3.6 million tons with an estimated value of 7,993 million Mexican pesos is under protection.

It must be noted that the Moscamed Program conformed this past April 6 the presence of a specimen of the pest in the federated state. Promptly, a brigade of 19 technicians from the Directorate of Plant Health was organized to carry out actions to prevent the pest from settling and spreading throughout the country.

As of today, 618 traps and 1,634 bait stations have been installed in the federated state; 197 fruit samples have been collected and dissected, and over 350 hectares have been sprayed by land.

With the collaboration of the region's producers, aerial spraying over 946 hectares started on that week, and will continue during five weeks.

Three areas where the pest has been introduced remain active, where as of today, 17 adult Mediterranean flies have been collected.

Moreover, in accordance with the Federal Plant Health Law, the publication of the National Emergency Device against the Mediterranean fly, which specifies the regulated area, the scientific and common names of the fruits that host the pest subject to regulation, the Federal Verification and Inspection points, and the phytosanitary control and eradication measures, is under process.

It is worth mentioning that, to control and eradicate the pest, the Senasica's Moscamed program employs an integrated management scheme consisting of biological control, spraying of organic substances and the Sterile Insect Technique, which entails the production and release of sterile, male Mediterranean flies that mate with fertile females to stop them from reproducing.

Many types of traps and bait stations, which contain specific food and sexual lures to capture Mediterranean flies, are used to measure the density of the pest and pinpoint their location.

The Mediterranean fly, of which Mexico is free of, is one of the most destructive non-native pests for fruits and vegetables.

The foregoing actions aim to maintain this status, since the countries where the pest has settled are subject to severe quarantine actions that stop them from placing more than 250 fruit and vegetable products in the international market.