



Launch of Research Project

“FF-IPM: In-silico boosted, pest prevention and off-season focused IPM against new and emerging fruit flies ('OFF-Season' FF-IPM)”

The Kick-off meeting of the project "*FF-IPM: In-silico boosted, pest prevention and off-season focused IPM against new and emerging fruit flies ('OFF-Season' FF-IPM)*" within the week of 16-20 September 2019 was largely successful with more than 100 participants and 22 invited speakers from around the world offering their expert input on the prevention, detection and integration of pest management approaches for fruit flies. In particular, on Monday 16 September 2019, a public workshop on "Approaches of stakeholders in tackling the problem of fruit flies" was held, with invited speakers representing EC, EPPO, EFSA, the research community, NPPOs and producers/agronomists. Issues such as (1) the fruit fly problem from their perspective; (2) detection and reporting; (3) current practices in fruit fly management; (4) fruit trading – export – import; and (5) the role and involvement of national and regional plant protection agencies were presented and discussed. Conclusions were drawn to serve as a roadmap in order to thoroughly target and address their needs and expectations.

The FF-IPM project refers to three species of fruit fly (Tephritidae) that cause significant losses in the production and marketing of fresh fruit worldwide. This is the Mediterranean fly (*Ceratitis capitata*), which has been threatening in recent years even temperate regions of Europe, as well as the "eastern" fly (*Bactrocera dorsalis*) and the peach fly (*B. zonata*) which are important invasive species and imminent threat to Europe's fruit crops.

The purpose of the project is to (a) prevent through the effective implementation of measures in the early stages of the insect invasion process and (b) tackle established species in out-of-season periods considered crucial

for the development of their populations (off-season IPM). In this context, innovative tools will be developed to (a) prevent the introduction of infected fruit, (b) locate populations in the early stages of the invasion, and (c) biological control and response strategies based on the use of computers and appropriate software. Pilot tests will be carried out in 8 different countries.

The results of the project will help understand the factors that determine the success of the installation of biological invasions in the context of climate change and to prepare European countries to tackle important new species of invaders by promoting the production and marketing of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The FF-IPM project is funded by the European Union under Horizon 2020 and coordinated by the Entomology and Agricultural Zoology Laboratory of the University of Thessaly. The project consortium consists of 21 research organizations and private actors from 15 countries (10 European, Israel, South Africa, China, Australia and the USA).

FF-IPM DOCUMENT TYPE:	PRESS RELEASE
DATE:	10 OCTOBER 2019
CLASSIFICATION:	PUBLIC
USE:	UNRESTRICTED
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REF no. FFPR-1001/UTH	