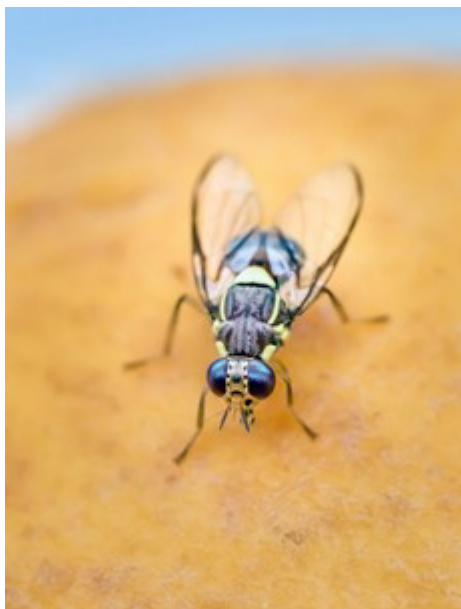


EU considering removing black spot and three fruit fly species from European list of priority pests

Brussels is close to completing its revision of the list of "priority" plant pests and diseases covered by Regulation 2019/1702. In March, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the two official bodies acting as advisers for the European Commission (EC), completed their update of the economic, social, and environmental impact assessment of the 46 main organisms already regulated as quarantine pests, with the aim of defining the new ranking that will replace the current top-20 priority list. The inclusion in that assessment of certain forestry and agroforestry pests, invasive species not previously considered, and a review of the criteria and estimated damage for those already evaluated in 2019 seemed to suggest that the list could be significantly altered.



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© CGC Eventually, based on this initial analysis, a new proposal co-authored by both bodies has recently been published, identifying the pests that could be replaced on the list. This proposal suggests adding nine new quarantine pests (three affecting forestry, three affecting cereals and herbaceous crops, and three affecting vegetables and tomatoes). If the list is not expanded (so as to avoid additional expenditure), an equal number of pests would lose their priority status, four of which with a direct impact on citrus and many other fruit crops. Those four are: citrus black spot (*Phyllosticta citricarpa*) and three fruit fly species: the oriental fruit fly (*Bactrocera dorsalis*), peach fruit fly (*B. zonata*), and the Mexican fruit fly (*Anastrepha ludens*). The Citrus Management Committee (CGC) rejects this option, arguing that if these pests are delisted, member states would no longer be required to monitor their presence, and "without early detection and with fewer resources to eradicate them, it is very likely that these devastating pests will end up establishing themselves in Spain's citrus and fruit-growing areas," says the organization's president Inmaculada Sanfeliu.

The CGC argues that the list should be expanded. Furthermore, Inmaculada believes that the EU funds allocated for the implementation of this regulation are clearly insufficient. In the last period during which such measures were co-financed (2023 and 2024) the EU budget barely exceeded €8 million across all 27 member states. That figure is negligible when set against the estimations from EFSA and the JRC, which say that the potential losses caused by the establishment of the four citrus pests that could be delisted would amount to as much as €5,736.88 million, with €2,490 million of that attributable to the fungus alone.



For more information:

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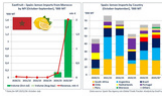
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