



City of Riverside, California  
Office of the Mayor  
**PATRICIA LOCK DAWSON**



February 27, 2024

Honorable Robert Rivas  
Speaker of the California Assembly  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249

Honorable Jesse Gabriel  
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
1021 O Street, Suite 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SUPPORT – Newsom Administration's Proposal to Spend \$22 million to Combat the Spread of Exotic Fruit Flies**

Dear Speaker Rivas and Chair Gabriel,

On behalf of the City of Riverside, I write to express our strong support for the Newsom Administration's proposal to spend \$22 million from the general fund to respond to the exotic fruit fly infestations across the state.

The Oriental fruit fly is an invasive pest that attacks more than 230 types of fruits and vegetables, ultimately making the produce unfit for human consumption. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture "if left unchecked, the Oriental fruit fly could become permanently established and cause billions of dollars' worth of losses annually, which would significantly impact California's food supply". The agency said if an Oriental fruit fly infestation is not eliminated, it could cost between \$44 and \$176 million "in crop losses, additional pesticide use, and quarantine requirements".

In the City of Riverside, there are 150 small growers with a typical farm size of five to twenty-five acres and at least 25% of these small growers are citrus growers. Currently, 100% of the City is in the recent quarantine for the oriental fruit fly. Prescribed treatment for the fruit fly includes spraying, netting and monitoring all of which can be extremely costly for our small growers.

The Oriental fruit fly presents a significant threat to the natural environment, agriculture and economy of California. For these reasons, the City of Riverside strongly supports Governor Newsom's proposal to spend \$22 million to combat the spread of exotic fruit flies. If you have questions regarding the City's position, please contact Chekesha Gilliam, Intergovernmental Relations Officer at (951) 826-2419 or CGilliam@riversideca.gov.

Sincerely,

Patricia Lock Dawson  
Mayor, City of Riverside

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Budget Committee  
City of Riverside Legislative Delegation