

Notes from PFAC Phorid Flies Meeting on March 23, 2018 at New Garden Township

Attendees: D Vymazal, State Senators Office; E Roe, State Representative; F Strathmeyer, PA Dept of Ag; R Welliver, PA Dept of Ag; T Scheivert, NGT Manager; M Zuk, Chester County Conservation; S Shirk, PSU Extension; M Gorgo-Gourovitch, PSU Extension; I Shimano, PSU; M Wolfin, PSU

Residents and Township Attendees: B Runkle, D Runkle, J Miscione, C Lovett, C Carson from Harrogate; G Emery, P Emery from Lower Oxford Township:

General - Joe Miscione gave a presentation on the work, findings and conclusions of a project to identify the source of the phorid fly infestation in the Harrogate community. The activities included daily fly counts in homes, soil and air sampling across the community, an insecticide spray test and weather correlations. It was concluded that the mushroom farms adjacent to Harrogate are the source and that the wind direction and speed impacted the level of flies in the homes.

- Although current research at PSU is focussed on the control of phorid flies in mushroom houses it was felt that more time should be spent on site in the communities experiencing the infestation to understand what attracts the flies to specific homes. It is also possible that the flies leave markers on the siding or structures that attract other phorids.

Penn State University:

- PSU have applied for funding to be used to support monitoring of phorid fly populations in residential areas. A decision is only likely to be made in a couple of months.
- A post-doctoral scholar is working to identify a sex pheromone or attractant that could be used to attract and trap adult phorid flies.
- Testing of products already registered for use in other crop systems is continuing with possible label extension for mushroom crops.
- There is ongoing discussion and cooperation on the phorid fly issue across many of the university departments.

Mushroom Industry:

- There were no attendees from the mushroom industry

PA Dept of Agriculture:

- Fred Strathmeyer led a discussion on the possibility of an informational meeting in Harrisburg to make the legislators more aware of the impact of phorid fly infestations on the residents in Southern Chester County. This could target specific members of the committees that make decisions on funding research projects in the agricultural area. It should involve groups of residents, mushroom farmers, and researchers focussed on the phorid fly issue. He stressed that it should be a joint

effort with the mushroom growers as they also feel the impact on their yields and conditions for their workers.

PA State

- Eric Roe provided details of a meeting he had with Rick Roush from PSU on the research work being conducted on controlling phorid flies. He also answered questions on various other topics related to the phorid flies.
- Don Vymazal provided an update from Senator Dinniman's office.
- Both speakers emphasized the importance of ongoing funding for research and not just short term funding.