

Fruit Flies

(drosophila melanogaster)



Fruit flies are sometimes called vinegar flies. They are small, red-eyed, 1/4 inch long flies commonly associated with overripe and fermenting fruits and vegetables. Fruit need not be present, however, as they can reproduce anywhere there is fermenting organic matter that stays consistently wet or moist. They can breed in slow-moving drains with a layer of slime and wet areas under refrigeration, and in garbage containers and discarded bottles and cans.

Many of the flies people assume are fruit flies are actually phorid flies. Fruit flies are more likely to be associated with fresh fruit and the phorid fly is more more likely to be associated with drains and sewers.

The fruit fly has the distinction of being a valuable test subject in genetic research. On the other hand, one variety, the Mediterranean Fruit Fly (Medfly), has caused major problems with fruit growers.

Control: Adult flies can easily be killed with a common aerosol for flying insects. The problem is it may not be safe to use insecticides in the area they are infesting and they will breed faster than you can kill them. **THE PRIMARY CONTROL IN ELIMINATING AND PREVENTING FRUIT FLIES IS SANITATION.**

You must eliminate the breeding sources. Hot water and disinfectant and the cleaning of drains, garbage containers, and under equipment is critical. You must clean equipment such as juice machines and anywhere wet organic material can accumulate. Light traps and drain cleaners may help in commercial kitchens, but are not a substitute for sanitation.



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