



How can I help reduce the impacts of stable fly in my community?



Stable fly (*Stomoxys calcitrans*) is a serious pest of livestock, particularly horses and cattle on the Swan Coastal Plain. It has a painful bite that causes pain and distress to people, pets and grazing animals.

Stable fly lay their eggs in soil containing rotting organic matter such as decomposing hay, remnant vegetable produce, and aged manure. By reducing decaying organic matter in and on the soil, you will be reducing the number of breeding sites available to stable flies.

DPIRD is working with horticultural industries, landholders, local governments and affected communities to reduce stable fly breeding to support long-term management of the issue.

You may not realise that stable flies are breeding in the rotting organic material on your property because once the stable fly emerges from its pupae, it flies off in search of a blood feed on neighbouring properties.

If you grow your own vegetables, have backyard chickens or piles of grass clippings on your property, follow these steps to reduce stable fly breeding.

Some local government areas supply a Food Organics, Garden Organics (FOGO) bin collection service. If you have this option place all decaying matter and organic waste into this bin. If you do not have a FOGO bin, it is important that you treat any organic waste by either burying it or using a combination of solarisation, mulching and pesticides.



Rotting hay is a breeding site for stable fly



Stable flies impact livestock



Avoid accumulating piles of organic material

Top tips to control stable fly breeding

Treat any organic waste by either burying it or using a combination of solarisation, mulching and pesticides. The following tips are best used together:

1. After you harvest any crops, **turn off** the water supply.
2. **Spread out** any rotting organic material so it gets full sun and dries out.
 - For any large pieces such as stumps, mulch at high speed or chop into smaller pieces. Once the organic material has dried out, combine it into the soil.
 - Or you may choose to **bury the waste** in 1 m of soil.
3. If the organic material gets wet, or if you notice any stable fly eggs, larvae or pupae, use an appropriate pesticide (see treatment below).
4. Avoid accumulating piles of decomposing organic material, but if the piles are there temporarily (1 to 2 days), **cover them** to keep dry.
5. **Spread** any animal manure, spilled feed and grass clippings **into thin layers** on the ground to dry out.
6. If you feed reject vegetable produce to grazing animals, feed in a **thin line**, in a feed trough or on a concrete base, then **remove** any remaining fodder **weekly** and treat using the options above.
7. **Remove** and **treat** any animal manure in and around pens, yards, water troughs, fences and gates **weekly**.

What to look for

When searching for evidence of stable fly breeding, look for eggs, larvae and pupae.



Stable fly life cycle



Newly hatched larvae



Empty pupae cases can be found in soil after the pupae has emerged

Treatment

If you find stable fly larvae, please search the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) [chemical registration information system](#) for appropriate insecticide to use for each situation.

If you are experiencing problems with stable flies, please report this to your [local government authority](#).

dpird.wa.gov.au/stablefly

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