

STATEMENT MADE BY CHILE AT THE MEETING OF 20-21 MARCH 1996

Chile: Declaration as a Country Free of Fruit Fly

On 13 December 1995, Chile declared that it was a country free of fruit fly, fulfilling the requirements for international recognition as such.

In Chile there is no fruit fly of the genera *Anastrepha*, *Bactrocera*, *Dacus* and *Toxotrypana*, and Mediterranean fly, *Ceratitis capitata* (Wied.), was found in an isolated enclave in the far north of the country (Arica-Azapa); the remainder of Chilean territory was recognized as pest-free in this regard.

To maintain and improve this favourable phytosanitary situation, in 1980 the Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) of the Chilean Ministry of Agriculture devised the "Fruit Fly Suppression and Eradication Project". The chief objective of the project has been to keep out flies which affect fruit of worldwide economic importance and, in addition, to eradicate any entry in the free area. In the case of Mediterranean fly, a programme to suppress and eradicate the species was carried out in Arica, Region I.

In keeping with the findings of the SAG's ongoing assessment in these matters, the area from the province of Iquique, Region I, to the south of Chile was recognized as pest-free, and this has had direct effects on international trade in Chilean fresh fruit.

Now, on completion of the process for declaring that Mediterranean fly has been eradicated from the province of Arica, this zone is incorporated in the insect-free area and Chile has become a country free of this major agricultural pest.

Mediterranean fly was first detected in South America in 1901. It was detected for the first time in Chile in 1963, in the provinces of Arica and Iquique, Region I, and since that time the Ministry of Agriculture has worked steadily to combat and eradicate it.

During the 32-year unceasing campaign against it, (1963-1995) Mediterranean fly has accidentally entered various districts between Region I and the Metropolitan Region and in all instances has been eradicated.

In this regard, it is important to highlight some historical phases:

- 1963-1970. Verification of the entry and establishment of the insect in various areas of Regions I, II, III, IV and V and the Metropolitan Region, and it was eradicated in all cases, with the exception of districts in Region I.

- 1980. Formulation and implementation of the Agriculture and Livestock Service's "Fruit Fly Suppression and Eradication Project".
- 1980-1995. With the project's coverage, action was taken in places in which entry or occurrence of the insect was detected, with two main working plans:
 - (a) Eradication when the insect entered or occurred in the free area;
 - (b) suppression and eradication in the province of Arica, the only enclave where the occurrence was found.
- 1987-1995. The SAG evaluated and applied the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) as the tool to suppress and eradicate the pest in the province of Arica. Sterile material was first imported and then the Sterile Insect Production Centre was built in the Lluta Valley, in Region I.
- 1995. Mediterranean fly was eradicated in the province of Arica and, consequently, **Chile officially declares that it is free of this pest.**

All the SAG action to combat Mediterranean fly has led to the suppression and eradication of the insect in the province of Arica, so that Chile can be internationally recognized as a pest-free country in this regard.

In this connection, there are worldwide standards for declaring Mediterranean fly eradication in a particular area, and they take account of climatic, phenological and biological aspects of the insect, as well as the theoretical duration of development cycles.

It should be noted that, since May 1995, the pest has not been detected at the metamorphosis stage in the province of Arica and, by early December, the three development cycles required for recognition of entire eradication from the area were completed.