R&D INSIGHTS
THE LATEST UPDATES ON R&D WITHIN THE OLIVE INDUSTRY | MARCH 2022

R&D Insights contains the latest levy-funded R&D project updates, research findings and related industry resources, which all happen under the Hort Innovation Olive Fund.

Hort Innovation partners with leading service providers to complete a range of R&D projects to ensure the long-term sustainability and profitability of the olive industry.

Early detection key to olive lace bug control

OLB lives on the underside of leaves out of direct sunlight, and both adults and nymphs are sap-suckers. All images courtesy Dr Vera Sergeeva.

Many olive growing areas have seen substantial rain throughout spring and summer 2021-22. While that means full dams and plenty of water for trees and fruit, the accompanying mild and often humid conditions have reportedly also resulted in a greatly increased incidence of pests and disease.

One of the most significant issues is olive lace bug (OLB), which has caused substantial tree damage and crop losses in many affected groves.

While on the increase across the country, OLB is not a new pest to olive growers and we do know how to control it. So here's a timely reminder of the basics, and a heads-up on the industry resources available to help you get on top of the crop-destroying critters in the future.

OLIVE LACE BUG, *Froggattia olivinia*

Size: adults 3mm

Biology: an Australian native species recorded in NSW, Queensland, Victoria, SA, WA and most recently Tasmania. Adults are mottled brown. There are two to four generations per year. Spiny nymphs occur in clusters on undersides of leaves; the first generation commonly emerge from leaves in spring.

Damage: all stages attack leaves with piercing mouthparts, causing yellow spotting. Black tar spots occur on undersides of leaves. Leaf drop and twig dieback may occur in severe infestations.

Natural enemies: few have been recorded; green lacewings have been observed predating on lace bug nymphs, and spiders on adults. Birds may also be predators. The native green lacewing *Mallada signata* is commercially available, and some growers have released it in their groves.