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Flying Foxes spread damage inland

The NSW Farmers' Association is calling for urgent assistance from the State Government to control the spread of Flying Foxes inland.

Flying Foxes have long been an issue for orchardists in the Sydney Basin, but in the last month the pests have moved west in large numbers.

NSW Farmers' Association Horticulture Chairman and Orange farmer Peter Darley says the Flying Foxes have already caused significant environmental damage both in town and to fruit orchards in the Central West.

"We also have some concerns about animal health given the diseases the Grey Headed Flying Fox can carry, including Hendra virus," he said.

"It is important that we understand why the Flying Foxes have suddenly moved into inland areas as they are rapidly spreading further afield. Reports have come from as far inland as Dubbo.

"On my own orchard the damage to the apple crop is significant, and if numbers increase so too will this damage," he said.

The NSW Farmers' Association is calling on all regional communities in NSW to report any sightings immediately.

"We need to have a very clear understanding of where the Flying Foxes are so we can understand why and how best to manage the problem," Mr Darley said.

"We are hopeful that cooler weather will move these coastal animals on, but it is highly likely that they will be back again in warmer weather.

"We are trying to work with the appropriate bodies to understand and hopefully solve this issue quickly, but we do need some commitment from the Government," Mr Darley concluded.

To report any sightings of Flying Foxes call Peter Myler at the National Parks & Wildlife Service on 02 6332 7641 or email peter.myler@environment.nsw.gov.au

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