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Stable fly threat in summer

STABLE fly could become an early problem this summer in some areas after mild winter conditions, according to the Department of Agriculture and Food.

Department researcher Bob Paulin said decaying organic matter associated with vegetable harvesting would be the major source of stable fly.

"Stable fly breeds mainly in vegetable crop residues and raw manure," he said.

"To complete its lifecycle, stable fly needs to feed on fresh blood, mainly from cattle and horses.

"The fly is hard to swat and keeps on biting, so it very annoying for hu-

mans. But horses and cattle are the real victims."

He said that in high-risk situations, landholders were urged to spray vegetable residues with registered insecticides before mulching and incorporating into the soil.

The use of raw poultry manure has been banned in local government areas affected by stable fly from Gingin to Bunbury. After September 2011, it will be banned throughout the year by those councils.

Mr Paulin asked people to contact their local government environmental health officer if unsure whether their area was affected.



(DAFWA Entomology: Pat Scallan)

Stable fly can cause discomfort and misery to livestock.