Project 45 Biology and Dispersal of Olive Fly
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Olive fruit fly (OLFF), Bactrocera oleae (Gmelin), is a recently introduced pest that lays its eggs within developing olive fruit, and the resulting fly larvae (i.e., maggots) feed on fruit tissues until the larvae pupate. There is a near-zero tolerance of this pest in the olive canning industry, and growers must completely suppress the insect or forfeit their crop. Over the last 3 years, research entomologists representing the UC campuses of Riverside, Berkeley, and Davis have relied upon the olive block at the Lindcove Research & Extension Center to provide suitable, pesticide-free olive fruit for maintenance of colonies of OLFF and their associated natural enemies for use in laboratory and field based biological studies as well as OLFF management research (e.g., introduction of natural enemies for biological control). Without access to these olives, these studies would be impossible on a year-round basis.