



**KENNETT TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-34

**DECLARATION
OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND ECONOMIC EMERGENCY**

The Board of Supervisors of Kennett Township hereby declares that Phorid fly infestation is a public health and economic emergency in the Township and the greater region.

The Township Manager is hereby authorized to communicate with the Township's State Representatives, State Senator, U.S. Representative, U.S. Senator, and to the Township's surrounding municipalities for further advancement of this Township mandate to eliminate the Phorid fly infestation.

The implementation of this Resolution shall be pursued through the promotion of inter-municipal and inter-agency cooperative measures - more particularly set forth in the Addendum to this Resolution 2024-34, partnering with all applicable federal and state representatives, regulators, nearby municipalities, researchers, mushroom growers, the American Mushroom Institute, other trade associations, and impacted residents, to pursue and promote effective solutions to the emergency.

Further, that the above-stated measures continue to be employed until such time as the emergency no longer exists, and solutions are in place which eliminate the Phorid fly infestation.

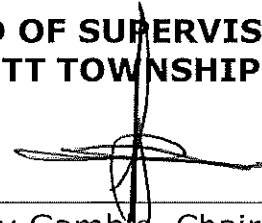
RESOLVED this 18th day of December, 2024

ATTEST:

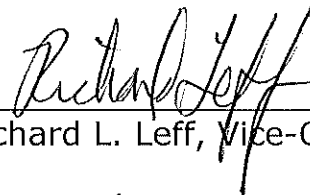


Alison Dobbins, Secretary

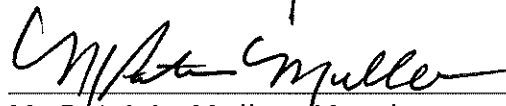
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
KENNETT TOWNSHIP:**



Geoffrey Gamble, Chairman



Richard L. Leff, Vice-Chairman



M. Patricia Muller, Member

ADDENDUM TO RESOLUTION NO. 2024-34

Background

Agriculture is the leading industry in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The mushroom growing and related industries are the number one agricultural and economic engine in the greater Kennett Square community, including Kennett Township and has been thriving in Kennett Township and neighboring communities since the late 1800s.

There are over 2,000 mushroom growing rooms in the greater southern Chester County community, generating over \$1 Billion in positive economic impact, but growing mushrooms attracts and facilitates the reproduction of Phorid flies which can reduce mushroom crop yield by 10%-40%, causing serious economic repercussions for growers. Phorid flies leave the mushroom growing facilities and invade private residences by the thousands, causing extreme discomfort, unsuitable living conditions, a negative financial impact to homeowners spending thousands of dollars to attempt to mitigate the nuisance, a decline in home values at the time of sale due to the required disclosure of the pests and the inability to peacefully enjoy their home.

Before 2012, Phorid flies were contained and eliminated by mushroom growers with an organophosphate, Diazinon. The Environmental Protection Agency began to eliminate organophosphates in 2010 and the manufacturer of Diazinon thereafter removed it from the market, causing economic injury to mushroom growers and a significant reduction in the quality of life for residents within several miles of mushroom growing rooms given the proliferation of the Phorid flies.

Recent Research

Research has been conducted through private organizations as well as by Dr. Michael Wolfin, Assistant Research Professor, Department of Entomology at Penn State University, to find solutions that are expected to eliminate or substantially reduce Phorid fly infestations. The results of research conducted by Dr. Wolfin in 2023 and 2024 show promising results in the reduction and possible elimination of the Phorid fly at the source in mushroom growing rooms. Phorid flies travel from mushroom farm to mushroom farm and to private residences in between and beyond.

Limitations of Authority

Kennett Township recognizes the limitations imposed on it by Commonwealth law in direct regulation of the Phorid fly infestation and recognizes that the primary culprit for the recent infestation issues has been driven, in large part, by the lack

of approved treatments by mushroom farmers, but the Township desires to act within its authority to push for the implementation of the measures set forth below.

Action

Kennett Township calls for a comprehensive, multi-agency approach to eliminate the Phorid fly infestation threat, to be immediately pursued including but not limited to:

- More State funding to research mitigation controls through Penn State University and private entities;
- Research must include:
 - Reduction and elimination of the Phorid fly at growing facilities;
 - Best practices and products to be used in private residences to eliminate Phorid fly infestations;
- State funding through grants for implementing the above-referenced Best Management Practices and products for growers
- Education for mushroom growers on mitigation controls and the distribution of the same;
- State regulations to allow mushroom growers the ability to implement effective, safe pest controls;
- Fast-tracking of review and approval of mitigation controls by the State and any other applicable regulatory authorities;
- A multi-agency task force be established to include the Department of Agriculture, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection, and any other overseeing governmental agency, and further to include Dr. Wolfin, representatives of the mushroom growing industry, and representatives of private citizens impacted by Phorid fly infestation;
- Education and information being provided, on a periodic basis, to the Township, its residents, and nearby municipalities.