

**Netting is a popular way to protect homegrown fruit, but some types of netting can entangle animals such as birds, flying-foxes and possums, often leading to their death.**

Appropriate sized netting keeps wildlife safer.



### **What is the new regulation?**

From 1 September 2021, netting used to protect household fruiting plants must have a mesh size of 5mm x 5mm or less at full stretch.

The regulation applies only to netting used to protect household fruiting plants.

### **What do you need to do?**

- Remove netting that does not meet the new regulations before 1 September 2021.
- Dispose of old netting safely by placing it into a strong biodegradable bag before putting into landfill.
- Use only netting that has a mesh size of 5mm x 5mm or less at full stretch to comply with the new regulation.

The use of netting with a mesh size greater than 5mm x 5mm can result in a fine under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019.

Fines also apply to anyone advertising or offering for sale the wrong sized netting to protect household fruiting plants.

### **What does 'household' mean?**

Generally, 'household' fruit-trees, vegetable gardens, or other fruiting plants are those grown:

- at a residential premises in an urban or suburban area
- at a residential premises in a semi-rural or rural area, primarily for personal use (even if some excess produce is shared or sold).



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### **Tips for safer netting**

It can be easier to protect selected branches rather than netting the whole tree. A range of bags, sleeves and socks are available to protect fruit on individual branches.


When netting the whole tree:

- Don't throw netting loosely over trees or allow netting to lie on the ground, where it can entangle reptiles and other animals
- Fix netting tightly to the tree trunk – this will stop wildlife, birds and rodents from reaching fruit.

### **What about netting on a frame?**

Netting applied to a frame, rather than directly on a tree, is also subject to the regulations. The netting must have a mesh size of 5mm x 5mm or less at full stretch.





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For enquiries about the Prevention  
of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019  
and safer netting, contact:

**Animal Welfare Victoria**  
**[www.animalwelfare.vic.gov.au](http://www.animalwelfare.vic.gov.au)**

For assistance with wildlife:

Telephone **136 186**

Authorised by Department of Jobs,  
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