

AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND

# Olivegrower & processor

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE OLIVE INDUSTRY



# Seymour goin', fishin'

March

# 2021

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**Cover: After four dynamic years at the helm of our industry organisation, AOA CEO Greg Seymour is passing the baton and going fishing.**



SHD field day Nangkita, SA



NSW DPI meeting, Wagga Wagga, NSW



Industry tour stop New Norcia, WA

In his first six months as AOA CEO, Greg Seymour visited regional areas across the country, connecting with Association and other industry members at events and meetings.

## CEO Greg Seymour swapping field days for fishing

After four dynamic years at the helm, Greg Seymour, the AOA's highly respected CEO, will be retiring at the end of this month. It's been a fast-paced incumbency, filled with projects, policy and renewed positivity within the industry. We're keen to know how he feels about his time and work with the industry, so we ran a few questions by him as he was preparing for his final round of AOA national field days.

### OG&P: When do you finish up?

GS: My last official day is 31 March. I had advised the AOA Board of my desire to retire this year at the 2020 AGM. The early call allowed the Board plenty of time to find a replacement and enable a seamless transition. A new CEO was engaged in late-February and will be attending a couple of the Healthy Soils Field Days as part of the handover process. Chairman Mike Thomsett and the Board have undertaken a very professional process that will enable the new CEO to hit the ground running.

### OG&P: Why? And why now?

GS: Why is fairly easy - it's purely for personal reasons. There are lots of things on my bucket list that I want to do and enjoy without the responsibility of leadership and the work commitment required as CEO of the AOA.

Why now? One of the hardest jobs of a leader is to know when their work is done. I wouldn't be leaving the AOA if the future for the organization was uncertain or not trending positively as it is now.

There is still a lot to be done but I am very confident that the AOA Board, team and service providers will maintain the momentum that's been generated over the last four years, and then take things to another level.

### OG&P: What are you doing next?

GS: I've been asked that a lot lately. My simple answer is - whatever I want, whenever I want. I am essentially retiring from full-time work to pursue a life of leisure. I will still do a bit of international pro bono work but I won't let that get in the way of leisure pursuits,

including my trip to the Gulf of Carpentaria in May chasing barramundi and mud crabs while dodging crocodiles.

### OG&P: What are the highlights of your time as AOA CEO?

GS: There have been many highlights over the past four years. The AOA's extension program; and the industry's response to the Covid 19 pandemic are the most recent ones that come to mind.

The highlights from the extension program that quickly come to mind are: the IPDM field days in 2019, Linda Costa's table olive workshops in February 2020, the webinar series during Covid, the virtual 2020 National Conference and the AIOA Gala Presentation held online last October. These were all well attended, with very positive post-event evaluation.

The catastrophic impact of the drought on production, and of Covid on food service markets and farmers markets around the country, caused disarray, uncertainty and despair for many olive businesses. The ability of people to reinvent business models and develop new marketing channels under such pressure in a short period of time impressed me greatly.

I was equally impressed with how the AOA team responded to Covid by quickly learning new skills and systems to help cope with the uncertainty of the situation. The Board met regularly via Zoom for briefings and strategic decision-making, while the "engine room" moved our extension activities online and ramped up our industry communications.

As well as meeting the immediate industry crisis, the AOA team learned new things

### Michael Thomsett, AOA President

"Greg has done a marvellous job for the organisation in his role as CEO.

"Immediately on appointment his ability to rapidly pick up the nuances of a diverse and varied industry put him in a strong position to work closely and effectively with the board of directors. Instigating a high level of risk management competency within the boardroom was an early priority, following on with the skills needed for approaching advocacy with awareness of the broader political landscape.

"These are valuable skills for the AOA to effectively undertake the core business of the organisation.

"His expertise also steered the company on a more sustainable financial trajectory. This is a commendable legacy.

"Greg's approachable style, alongside his vast skill set, made him a perfect fit not only in the boardroom but for the AOA membership and the broader Australian olive industry.

"As President, on behalf of the members of the AOA, I want to say 'Thank you, Greg Seymour'.

that will become part of the way AOA does business in the future. I believe the AOA's approach to Covid as an opportunity has contributed in some way to maintaining industry momentum during these tough times.





Highly successful industry conferences have been a highlight of Seymour's time as CEO.

#### OG&P: What do you count as your major achievements?

GS: The achievements I am most proud of during my time as CEO were the result of a team effort, and often built on the hard work of many who came before us.

The organisation has good corporate governance and a strong strategic focus around industry development. It is in a stable financial position with diversified income streams. There is a strong accountability ethic coupled with an effective communication capability.

Other highlights include the successful acquisition and integration of the *Olivegrower & Processor* masthead into the AOA business; the development of a professional advocacy capacity for the AOA; and the re-establishment of strong relationships with government departments that impact on the olive business, at both federal and state levels.

#### OG&P: What have you enjoyed most about the role?

GS: The people. And I've enjoyed the industry in general too. I now consume EVOO every day and table olives a few times a week. I doubt that would have happened if I hadn't come to work for the AOA.

People were very generous with their knowledge, supportive in their suggestions, and candid in their criticisms when I took on the CEO role in 2017. This support continued throughout my tenure and has contributed greatly to what has been achieved in four years.

#### And what's been the most frustrating?

Probably my biggest disappointment has been our inability to develop a sustainable high calibre generic marketing program for Australian EVOO (AEVOO) and table olives. I am very pleased with what we have achieved through our minimally resourced PR program, particularly the positioning of AEVOO in the

#### Paul Miller, AOA Director and International Advisor

"In his time with the AOA Greg has always been the consummate professional. That Greg was a newcomer to the world of olive oil when he became the CEO of the AOA was no impediment, in fact it worked to our advantage. With his vast experience in agriculture and his fresh eyes on the olive industry he quickly discerned the nature of our industry, the aims and principles behind what the AOA does and, critically, the strengths and weaknesses of what we have been trying to achieve. "Able supported by Elizabeth, Gerri, Peter and the AOA Board, Greg has led and grown the activities of the AOA through good and difficult years for the industry. In particular the increased and effective extension activities now available to the industry are a credit to Greg and the team. In my case the long term work on trade standards here and internationally has benefited significantly from Greg's capable assistance and input. His government liaison work has been first rate and his maintenance of international industry-group contacts likewise. I value his advice and strategic thinking immensely.

"Greg once told me that he was not particularly a fan of eating olive oil or olives, however, he totally understood the business sense for a high-cost producer country like Australia to pursue a high profile product quality strategy. His prior success with similar activities in other industries has been evident and of benefit to us in his time with the AOA.

"Greg and I spent some of our own time to meet up in Spain in 2019 where we explored the rich culture of olives and olive oil and met some of the great producers of Spain. Importantly, I attempted to cure him of his indifference to the culinary value of EVOO by introducing him to the wonderful food that great EVOO is essential for. I believe that I may have made some progress during a couple of superb meals with fine EVOO, however, I am absolutely certain that jamón ibérico is now and forever a favourite! (It was my pleasure Greg.)

"In short we have been lucky to have Greg as CEO of the AOA and even more fortunate that he extended his time with us. Heartfelt thanks from me and I hope we can stay in touch."

domestic market, but so much more could be accomplished with more resources.

#### Where do you feel the AOA is positioned now?

The AOA is in a very strong sustainable position to deliver on its core mission of fostering and facilitating the ongoing

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One of Seymour's less glamorous roles as CEO was 'Dishwasher Extraordinaire', hand-washing hundreds of EVOO tasting glasses during AIOA judging days.

### Lisa Rowntree - Producer, AOA Director and previous CEO

"Right from the beginning Greg was engaging, invested and committed to ensuring that the AOA went from strength to strength. I consider it a very lucky find that we came across such a gem when looking for a CEO to take over from me.

"From my first meeting with Greg, I knew he would be the right fit. His ideas on how to keep the industry viable, relevant and sustainable were always well received by the Board. The knowledge he brought from his involvement with other industry associations helped us considerably.

"Over the years it has been great to work with Greg. In the first year of his appointment I stayed on as his assistant to ensure a smooth transition. While it was a busy year, it was also a very rewarding year for me. Greg was easy to work with, a lot of fun, and full of enthusiasm and good humour.

"The Australian Olive Industry has benefited greatly from Greg's wisdom and direction.

"I wish Greg all the very best with his travels, fishing and golf, and hope our paths cross again in the future."

development of the Australian olive industry. It is the calibre of people I sadly leave behind in the AOA and the wider industry community that gives me the confidence that the future for both the AOA and the industry is very bright.

The Association has a talented and

experienced Board with a good spread of skills that provide the company with a strong strategic focus, responsible fiscal management and good corporate governance. This capability allows the organisation to concentrate on its core tasks without being distracted by irrelevant issues

not associated with its strategic goals.

There is also an extensive regional talent pool that contributes in many ways to AOA activities and other industry initiatives. The industry could not achieve what it does without this enormous voluntary effort.

Past President Peter O'Meara and current President Michael Thomsett have provided the Board and the organisation with effective and committed leadership that has strengthened the AOA. I have enjoyed working with both men immensely. Mike has developed a good understanding of what it takes for an organization like AOA to deliver benefits for its stakeholders, so I am confident AOA will continue to have effective leadership.

The AOA's "engine room" (Liz, Gerri, and Peter) has plenty of talent, grunt and teamwork that has the organization punching way above its weight in terms of outputs and outcomes delivered per \$ invested. With Trudie Michels (AIOA) and Paul Miller (standards and international affairs) they form an effective operational unit that just gets on with it, and will certainly keep the show on the road.

### OG&P: What are your hopes for the future of the industry?

GS: I hope the Australian olive industry can reach its full potential in the not too distant future. If that is to happen producers need to:

- stay focused on improving productivity to internationally competitive levels;
- continually strive for ultra-premium quality for all products, particularly EVOO; and
- continue to educate consumers in domestic and international markets about the health benefits of Australian EVOO using the joy of eating meals with lots of Aussie EVOO and table olives in them as the communications hook.

The industry will also need strong strategic leadership to achieve its potential. I am confident the AOA is set up to provide that vital ingredient.

### Owen Carington Smith, Bruny Island Olives

"I recently heard of Greg's departure with surprise and disappointment that the AOA was losing such a capable CEO.

"Greg started in March 2017 with a great background in horticulture and trade. In the following four years Greg has energised the AOA team and members as part of his mission.

"When he started, he stated his vision as follows:

*For the AOA to be a highly efficient and effective organisation that is internationally respected for delivering great outcomes for our members and the industry. I will be working hard with the AOA Board to ensure that the AOA is an organization that you are proud of, and want to be part of – but I will need your help. I look forward to your support in helping AOA to become a modern, focused, and flexible organisation that can provide leadership and meet the demands of the rapidly changing world in which your businesses operate.*

"Greg has exceeded these personal objectives.

"He set about building on a very talented but small team of experts/scientists and then widened this to include international and Australian specialists to address significant grove productivity beyond the all-important disease issues.

Diversification into table olive production, the use of new high-tech farming tools, encouragement of a focus on great soils as the foundation for great productivity, and the importance of pruning were all among the focal points.

"These experts have joined the AOA conferences, field days and Zoom sessions because they sense that something dynamic is happening and want to be a part of it, even though we are a relative small industry.

"The AOA competition has benefited from Greg's big vision and gone truly international. Any grove that wins a medal has a great market advantage. We are only a boutique producer but have been amazed at how we have benefited in demand and price from winning AIOA awards in the last two years. The running of such a successful competition during the 2020 Covid lockdown is testimony to the innovation, "can do culture" and aspiration in the team that Greg has led.

"It also demonstrates the comprehensive approach that the AOA now aspires to: not just 'enter the competition' but 'here is the help to get to number one'.

"At conferences and field days it is always a pleasure to catch up with Greg and his team. He has made a point of getting to know most members personally and he always shows a personal interest, no matter how small or big the operation.

"I have had high level positions in other primary producing bodies; in comparison the AOA is an over-achiever. We are proud to be a member of the AOA and of all it has done to help us and so many others.

"Thanks Greg, you go out on a high. Well done and all the best in your retirement."



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# AOA welcomes new CEO Michael Southan

The AOA has announced the appointment of Michael Southan as its new CEO, following the retirement of Greg Seymour.

With a PhD in Agricultural Chemistry, Southan has spent the past 20 years involved in agriculture, working on crop quality in the grains industry. His focus is quality in relation to suitability and functionality for various food products in both domestic and export markets, looking at the Asian market in particular.

He also has practical experience in agriculture as the owner of a mixed farm near Cowra in New South Wales. Predominantly beef cattle and sheep grazing, the property also encompasses cropping and nut trees, so he's had more than a taste of life in horticulture too. And while he isn't on site 24/7, he's there regularly and involved across the board, from decision-making to fencing.

## Industry interest

Southan said there's a lot about olives which attracted him to the AOA role.

"Olives epitomise that functionality and quality in the food industry even more than grains, and it's great to see an industry which is strongly promoting agriculture as part of the wider, more 'mainstream' food industry," he said.

"The utilisation of technology and food management within the production process, with really good vertical integration, I also find really interesting.

"I've been seeing the industry grow tremendously in a fairly short space of time and really capture an important part of the domestic market, with supermarket shelves having a predominance now of EVOO rather than any other cooking oil. It shows what can be done when you have great quality products across the industry ... it's exciting to be able to be a part of that, and I'd like to see it continue to expand and grow."

## EVOO entree

And while he says he has a lot to learn about the industry itself, he's already an EVOO fan.

"Clearly I don't have a background in olives, or much in horticulture, so I'll be busy getting up to speed in understanding the industry, both from a production point of view and the challenges it has in terms of its size in gaining access to markets and competition issues," he said.

"There are always issues particular to an industry, so my initial focus will be getting my head around what's there and then working out a strategy. For me that's also what will make the job really interesting.

"And while I'm definitely no olive oil expert, my wife Michelle is a food writer, so I've had an entrée into EVOO and how to use EVOO in cooking etc. It's an amazing food and I'm looking forward to learning a lot more about it, and tasting a lot more great Australian oils.

"All the olive people I've met so far have been terrific too, and I'm also really looking



**A farm owner with a PhD in agricultural chemistry, new AOA CEO Michael Southan brings a passionate interest and 20 years' experience in food production to the role.**

forward to working to them. I think it's going to be an exciting job."

Southan will officially take up the position on 1 April but has been out and about already meeting growers at the Hunter Valley and Victorian Healthy Soils Field Days.

We wish him a warm welcome to the AOA and the olive industry, and will catch up with him again in the June edition when he's had a chance to settle in.

AOA President Mike Thomsett said Southan proved the ideal candidate for the CEO position, chosen from a strong field of applicants via a rigorous selection process.

"We had 32 applications, many with excellent career histories and qualifications, and a shortlist of twelve. Five were selected by the committee for Zoom interviews, all very worthy contenders for the position," he said.

"Michael Southan's interview was a standout, and the committee recognised him as the leading candidate.

"Michael's experience in the grains industry, with both a high level of technical ability and proven leadership ability, saw him highly recommended by his peers. His focus on value adding, processing and quality is an ideal fit for our industry, as are his outstanding skills in stakeholder communications and his demonstrated ability to problem solve and 'think outside the box'.

"He also has a sound, measured approach to advocacy and lobbying, and solid financial experience, and I have no doubt he will quickly make the position his own.

"The Board and I are looking forward to working with Michael as we continue to tackle the industry's challenges and make the most of our opportunities."

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# Planning underway for 2021 Hunter Olive Show

After a forced hiatus in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, planning is well underway for the 2021 Hunter Olive Show. The Hunter Olive Association organising committee has been busy and key dates have already been confirmed, as follows:

- Entries open – Monday, 2 August
- Entries close – Friday, 3 September
- Judging – Saturday, 25 September
- Awards night – Thursday, 7 October

## Inclusive and affordable

One of the last remaining regional olive competitions in Australia, the Hunter Olive Show has seen increased popularity and success in recent years, with strong support across all product classes. Open to both members and non-members, the inclusive industry show has classes for EVOO and flavoured oils, plus a range of table olives and olive products including tapenades and olive spreads.

Major awards include Most Successful Exhibitor, Best EVOO and Table Olive of Show, Best EVOO and Table Olive from Hunter Valley Fruit, Best Infused Oil of Show, Best Tapenade of Show, and state-based awards for Best EVOO from Tasmanian, Victorian and NSW Fruit.

# HUNTER OLIVE ASSOCIATION

This year's competition also sees the introduction of an additional major award, with the title of Best Varietal EVOO of Show also up for grabs. The new award recognises and celebrates the work being done by growers in developing a regional varietal excellence.

And as always, the organisers are continuing with their aim of running an affordable olive show, offering low entry and testing fees thanks to the support of the competition's industry sponsors and a dedicated group of volunteers.

Every entry will also once again receive quality feedback to use for future improvement and development.

More information: [www.hunterolives.asn.au](http://www.hunterolives.asn.au) or email Alan Smith at [treasurer@hunterolives.asn.au](mailto:treasurer@hunterolives.asn.au).

What's happening in your region? Send your news to Gerri at: [editor@olivegrower.com.au](mailto:editor@olivegrower.com.au)

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# Fruitful outcomes for NOVA grove restoration project

The pandemic may have put a pause on OliveSA group gatherings at the experimental NOVA grove but the groundwork done beforehand, and individual efforts since, have nonetheless achieved dramatic results.

Now in its third year of activity, the NOVA restoration project is a labour of love for OSA members, and part of a collective project to restore and rejuvenate the National Olive Variety Assessment Collection site at the University of Adelaide's Roseworthy campus.

## Transformative TLC

Over the past two years, OSA members have held a number of working bees at the site, transforming the abandoned grove from struggling, non-yielding trees into lush, healthy varieties with an impressive 2021 crop.

Major rejuvenation pruning of the 1000 trees was the first task undertaken, along with removal of thousands of suckers around and among them. The trees responded quickly to air, light and the lower canopy load, with new growth evident within weeks.

The prunings were then chipped and distributed as mulch back around the trees, making a huge difference to soil moisture retention in the arid mid-North SA environment.

The third box ticked was repairing and recommissioning the irrigation system, which had suffered badly after years of disuse. Led by OSA member Michael Harbison, leaks were fixed and the controller overhauled, and tree health and regrowth took off like a rocket, leading to this year's satisfyingly healthy crop.

## Research potential

OSA President Michael Johnston said that, with the grove now functional once again, project collaborators from the University of Adelaide are now keen to undertake some sort of research there.

"In late February Michael Harbison and I met on-site with a group from the University's Waite research department," he said.

"Our regular contact, Associate Lecturer Ben Pike from the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine, was joined by Associate Professor Cassandra Collins, Dr Roberta De Bei and two students, Jake Winter and Daniela Rodie for what ended up being an active meeting.

"After an overview of the site and what has been done to date, they collected soil samples and leaf samples from various varieties, and looked at moisture and soil depth across the

grove. We're hoping they'll be able to provide us with some useful management information from the results of those.

"We talked about future projects like harvesting, and how that will occur, and the continuation of the irrigation system upgrade. Michael (Harbison) has got it working well but it's 20 years old and needs to eventually be replaced.

"They're also very receptive to being able to carry out new research projects there – for example, looking at why olive trees grow so many suckers.

"We're still negotiating the harvest details but at this stage it looks like the harvest might be a combined effort between OSA and the University.

"We desperately need to knock off suckers again before then, though, as on some trees they're blocking shaker access, so we'll be having several more working bees to do that between now and mid-April. While they're very intrusive, it's probably a good sign that the trees are healthy, have plenty of water, and they want to grow."

Johnston said there are also ongoing discussions within the University about including olive growing modules in the curriculum of a new horticultural course, using the rejuvenated NOVA site for the practical element.

All up, he said, it was a "very fruitful" meeting – reflecting the new status of the NOVA grove itself.



When OSA members started the grove rejuvenation project in 2019, the trees were sparse and overgrown, with severe suckering (left). Pruning and clean-up working bees provided a clean, open shape for increased health and ease of hand-harvesting (right).



With continuing care, including repair of the irrigation system, the trees are now healthy, lush and laden with fruit.

## Join the NOVA caretakers

While the NOVA grove rejuvenation is going ahead in leaps and bounds, there's still plenty to do at the site - and will be into the future.

"The new batch of suckers need to be removed as soon as possible," Johnson said.

"There's also the harvest this year, and then ongoing grove maintenance work into the future.

"We've established a volunteer group of members and interested friends to care for the grove, getting together for semi-regular working bees, and are keen to hear from anyone who's interested in joining us. The really hard work is done now, so if you're good with secateurs or a ride-on it's a satisfying way to spend a day here and there with a group of like-minded people.

"And for beginners, it's a great opportunity to learn more about olive tree pruning and grove maintenance from people who've spent a few years in the game."

Anyone interested in becoming a part of the NOVA caretaking group can contact Michael Harbison at [harbison@harbison.com.au](mailto:harbison@harbison.com.au).

\*\*The NOVA grove is located on Mudla Wirra Road, Wasleys, around 50kms north of Adelaide.





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• Gold - Lauriston Grove Manzanillo  
• Gold - Lauriston Grove Hardy's Mammoth  
• Silver - Lauriston Grove Frantoio  
• Bronze - Lauriston Grove Correggiola



Rob and Melanie Whyte, Gooramadda Olives - Rutherglen, VIC  
• Reserve Champion Table Olives - Gooramadda Olives Kalamata  
• Gold - Gooramadda Olives Kalamata  
• Gold - Mel's Blend EVOO  
• Bronze - Spicy Kings Olives



Lisa and David Lindholm, Leaping Goat Olive Oil - Mornington Peninsula, VIC  
• Gold - Leaping Goat Olive Oil EVOO





Michael and Rosemary Johnston, Michael's Olives - Willunga Hill, SA

- Gold - Michael's Olives Koroneiki
- Best South Australian Extra Virgin Olive Oil - Michael's Olives Koroneiki



Monica Parvin, Romley Estate - Willunga, SA

- Champion Greek Varietal Extra Virgin Olive Oil - Romley Estate Grand Reserve Koroneiki
- Champion Other Varietal Extra Virgin Olive Oil - Romley Estate Family Reserve Hardy's Mammoth
- Gold - Romley Estate Grand Reserve
- Gold - Romley Estate Family Reserve
- Bronze - Romley Estate Garlic Extra Virgin Olive Oil



Zefferino Monini and Maria Flora Monini, MoniniSpA - Spoleto, Italy

- Bronze - Monini Classico 100% Italian Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Bronze - Monini GranFruttato 100% Italian Extra Virgin Olive Oil



Barry and Anne Sander, Tarralea Grove - Jarrahdale, WA

- Reserve Champion Robust EVOO - Tarralea Grove Barouni
- Best Western Australian Extra Virgin Olive Oil - Tarralea Grove Barouni
- Gold - Tarralea Grove Barouni
- Bronze - Tarralea Grove Mission, Kalamata, Frantoio and Manzanillo Blend
- Bronze - Tarralea Grove Hojiblanca



The 2020 AIOA assembled judges from both new and old-world olive producing regions, including (from left) China, Spain and New Zealand.

## AIOA offers international judging excellence

*With harvest 2021 on the way and quality crops forecast across the country, producers are also thinking forward to the opportunities presented by entry in the Australian International Olive Awards (AIOA). Along with proven marketing and sales benefits, the annual competition offers the chance for product appraisal and feedback from expert EVOO and table olive judges across the globe.*

Australian International Olive Awards Convener Trudie Michels said that, when compiling each year's judging team, she places a strong focus on ensuring broad-ranging judging expertise and experience.

"In 2020, eleven panels of well-credentialed olive experts from both the new and old-world olive producing regions were assembled. Together they formed an overall judging group of the highest calibre, offering a wealth of global olive competition experience and knowledge," she said.

"This incredible diversity of knowledge and experience reinforces objectivity in the judging panels and the process overall, ensuring a thoughtful, non-biased judging process based purely on merit."

### Benchmarking and training

Another important element is the additional benchmarking and training undertaken by all judging panels immediately prior to the start of the formal AIOA judging.

"This allows judges to align their palates and benchmark medal rankings," Michels said.

"This is an integral part of the competition framework, ensuring the highest level of quality and consistency across all classes and all eleven judging panels.

"The competition also prides itself on offering a number of 'Associate Judge' positions. These are training positions where associate judges hone their skills, obtain more experience and learn from the best. The benchmarking sessions are an integral part of the associates' learning process, allowing them to compare their own results and descriptors with those of the experienced judges, and refine them during the ensuing discussion period."

### Medals for merit

Michels said the AIOA judging format and practice regime ensures that every entry is treated fairly and with respect.

"There are no set timeframes; the judging panel members are given adequate time to assess each entry's aroma and organoleptic characteristics," she said.

"Medals are then awarded on those individual merits, rather than by comparison with other oils, ensuring a result which truly reflects the oil being judged. The judges' assessments are also used to provide comprehensive tasting note feedback for all entries.

"This is something the majority of other competitions do not provide but which we know is an invaluable tool for both future improvement and promotion of entrants' winning products."

### Commitment and flexibility

Michels said the 2020 competition also proved how well respected the AIOA, and the Australian industry, are by the global judging community.

"The positive response we had from the judges we approached was remarkable," she said.

"Almost without exception, they were keen to take part and were willing to work around the very different logistics of a 'COVID-safe competition' via remote judging. All volunteered their valuable time to judge this year's entries, with many travelling to judging locations and some even taking leave in order to participate.

"Competition was very strong last year and the judges were extremely professional and meticulous, ensuring that the 2020 Australian International once again achieved the highest standards of judging and organisational integrity.

"The AOA was truly indebted to all of the judges for their commitment to the competition and flexibility with the new format of judging. It allowed us to provide entrants with an even wider scope of judging experience and feedback, and is a format we intend to continue with into the future.

"There's another list of high-calibre judging candidates being formulated for this year's competition, and we're looking forward to announcing an exceptional global team of judges for 2021 in the coming months."

### Impressive list

AOA Director and former President Paul Miller has seen a lot of olive competitions during his long career in the industry, both in Australia and internationally. In terms of judging expertise, he rates this year's Australian International as among the best.

"I was truly impressed when I saw the 2020 judges list," he said.

"The 2020 AIOA was an amazing achievement in every way, and particularly in the calibre of the judging panels that were put together in other countries.

"I know some of the judges in each country from my other activities and they are first-rate people with immense industry knowledge and excellent olive oil tasting skills.

"And of course the Australian judging team is super, as we know!

"That this was set up quickly in the face of so many challenges, and that it ran so well, is a credit to Trudie and her team and to the enthusiastic can-do leadership of Greg Seymour."



# Rio Vista crushes it to take AIOA Best Flavoured – and more

Rio Vista Olives' Jared Bettio was really good at building houses, so when the residential scene starting slowing in the mid-2010s, he thought he'd give brand building a go. Not a construction brand, but a nod to his family's Italian heritage with a premium olive oil brand.

It was a great decision, which just four years later saw Bettio accepting one of the Australian olive industry's highest accolades.

The Adelaide Hills producer's Basil Pressed Agrumato was named Best Flavoured Olive Oil of Show at the 2020 Australian International Olive Awards, tied with New Zealand producer The Olive Press on an impressive 94 point score. They topped a strong field of flavoured oil entries, a category seeing exceptional growth in both popularity and quality in recent years.

Rio Vista won awards across a range of EVOO and flavoured oil categories in the 2020 competition, racking up a show-leading total of 11 Gold, three Silver and two Bronze medals, along with the Class award for Champion Agrumato Olive Oil – and, of course, the Best Flavoured award.

It was a satisfying follow-up to their success at the 2020 Royal Adelaide Olive Awards, where Rio Vista scooped the pool across the EVOO categories with its Signore single varietal. Awarded the judges' top score of 94 points, the Rio Vista Signore won Gold and Best in Class 1 - Provenance, along with the Best Robust Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Best South Australian EVOO in Show awards, eventually being named Best Extra Virgin Olive Oil in Show.

## Getting things right

Bettio said that while he's "never been one for accolades", the award is proof that they're getting things right – particularly in terms of their product range.

"If I can get someone to try a new oil and love it, that shows we're going in the right direction," he said.

"And in terms of quality, we've got a lot of improving still to do but it certainly shows we're on the right track.

"We took a bit of punt in producing five agrumato oils when everyone said on its way out, some even that it was dead. Well maybe adding essences and artificial flavours is dead but this oil won us major awards.

"And consumers love these oils, so we're getting them to use more olive oil and to appreciate high quality olive oil. That's a big win for everyone."



Jacqueline and Jared Bettio say Rio Vista's cache of 2020 awards have given them confidence that they're "on the right track" in terms of quality.

## Background

Rio Vista is a family business, with Jared's wife Jacqueline and sister Sarah both actively involved, and parents Lui and Tracie playing "a big part of the business".

"Dad is the one that got us started, and his passion for quality and doing things the right way is the example I try to follow," Jared said.

"And Mum is always there to help put quality systems in place, and then make sure they're running well."

There's also a grove manager and a production assistant, who helps with the processing and runs the bottling and packaging side of things.

Jared describes himself as "general manager and head miller" but said in reality, sales are a big part of his job at present. Eventually, he said, his role "should be between milling and overseeing stuff".

The family owns four groves across the wider Adelaide Hills region, all established





**With four separate groves and 15 varieties, harvest is hands-on for the whole Rio Vista team.**

when purchased in 2016. Getting down to work in their new groves was Bettio's first foray into olives.

"It seemed like a good idea at the time. I was looking at markets and residential building seemed to be slowing down but there was a growth in food production, so I thought I might diversify into that," he said.

"My grandfather was a farmer but broad acre, so nothing to do with olives. With an Italian background, though, you're

passionate about food and oil is one of those foods you're especially passionate about."

The four groves, situated at Mt Torrens, Mypolonga and Woodlane, have a total of 15 different varieties producing both table olive and oil fruit. Tree numbers for each vary between 200 and 4200 and they have a mix of growing methods, with 3000 FS17 trees planted at super high density and the rest traditionally.

Bettio said that while predominantly what

they have is what they bought, some is part of the brand's structured growth plan.

"We've planted about 1000 trees - around 10% of the total," he said.

"There were some varieties that we didn't have enough of, so we were rounding them out. We're also planning on planting another few thousand in the near future."

With diversity in mind (and ensuring they get a good range of healthy fats), the Bettios also have 550 avocado trees. The drought's

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meant a couple of lean crops recently but this year, Jared said, they're "looking good".

### Saving water

All of Rio Vista's groves are irrigated, some of the system inherited at purchase and most of it substantially upgraded. Some areas had been on drippers, now everything is on sprinklers, a practice which served the Mt Torrens grove well in the December 2019 Adelaide Hills fire. Bettio realised how dangerous the forecast conditions were and sacrificed the rest of his dam water onto the grove, irrigating it until the ground under the trees was completely soaked.

As a result the fire just smouldered through the grove and, while the adjacent gums were completely burned, the olive trees were left standing. While they were scorched and severely stressed, Bettio said only two trees have since died.

"We got water and nutrients back onto them as quickly as possible, and the soaking saved them from root damage, so there's been really strong regrowth since. Some have fruited this year, while the small amount which haven't are looking really good for next year," he said.

### Processing practice

With quality and freshness front of mind, Bettio said that its own processing facility was always a 'must have' for Rio Vista. Getting up to speed with running it, he said, was a big learning curve.

"The first season was trial and error - although we still won a Gold at the AIOA in 2017 - and then I did one of the processing courses with Pablo Canamasas. I learned a heap from that," he said.

"Since then I've done some milling in Italy

in their season, and I've now just finished doing a master miller's course through ESAO in Spain (online). I'm always trying to improve my skills.

"Otherwise, it's just lots of practice, and being very fussy with what you make.

### Best fruit, best oil

Bettio said he's a firm believer that you get the best oil out of the best fruit, but that there's a lot more to it than that.

***"I never come to work thinking I'm going to make a poor oil. It's always 'What's the best oil I can make today?'"***

"The fact that we grow it ourselves means we've got quality control the whole way through, which is really important," he said.

"And while any great oil starts in the grove, when it leaves it needs to be treated with as much care as the farmer gave it, so you've really got to trust the processor. I'm lucky in that way because I am the processor.

"For those who don't, you've got to have a great relationship with the miller and be sure that your fruit gets treated with the respect it deserves. You need to have someone who really cares.

"And don't just show up and say 'can you process this now?'. You've got to plan ahead and make sure you're both the same

page, particularly in terms of quality. I could make more oil out of the fruit I've got if I did different practices but I couldn't make the quality, so I won't do that.

"To me it's simple: if you want more quantity, grow more fruit, because if you've got 1000L of rubbish oil compared to 800L of quality oil, there's a massive difference in being able to sell it."

### Independent markets

That's reflected in Rio Vista's market success, with wide reach and strong demand across the product range.

"Our main range, Nothing but Olives, is in a lot of independent supermarkets and some regional Coles stores interstate," he said.

"Then our specialty oils - of which there are heaps - are in those supermarkets, sold online, and we're exporting a bit to the UK as well.

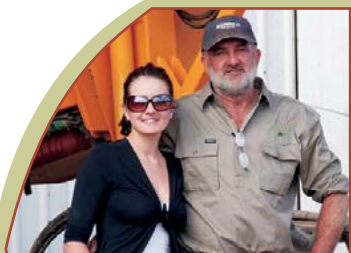
"We've got pretty good relationships with the independents, and it's been a positive experience getting our oils in there: we went and saw them, let them try the oil, and they took it. The oil speaks for itself.

"And that's where we sell most of our products. Online sales for us are less than 5% - maybe 10% through the main parts of COVID - but you wouldn't survive on it. The export to the UK was our first shipment and while we've had enquiries from other countries, they've gone a bit quiet during COVID. I've got a few more irons in the fire, though, and am hoping they're going to come good.

"So the export side is just small at this stage but it's progressing and I'm sure it'll get to the part of the business plan where it needs to be."

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Rio Vista's specialty oils are in strong demand, sold in independent supermarkets, online and recently also exported to the UK.

### Going for (all) Gold

In the meantime - despite judges' scores of 94 in both 2020 competitions - Bettio says he'll be busy honing his oil-making skills even further.

"It's the highest we've achieved so far but it's not where we want to get to yet. There are producers around the world scoring 100/100 and I'd like to think we can get to that. I don't think you can ever stop where you are, you can always keep improving every year.

"And awards like this help you want to do that. It meant a lot to the team, who've put a lot of effort and a lot of hours into it, and as a business we've achieved something. It's also very good for sales, as people care about the award.

"From the consumer perspective, I think quality competitions like the AIOA are important because otherwise people are price-driven instead of quality driven. If there's no way to differentiate quality, consumers won't spend the money to get a better oil.

"And for producers I think they're essential. It's the way to benchmark what you're doing, find out what's happening in the industry and learn from your peers.

### Listen, learn and love it

Having produced Gold medal-winning oils from his first year of production, we reckon Bettio must have some great tips to share. We asked him what he thinks are the most important elements behind Rio Vista's incredible success, and how he achieves such consistently high quality.

"First of all, you've got to have attention to detail. You can't be willing to cut corners," he said.

"In particular, you can't skimp on cleanliness, it's the number one thing. The standards are really well known and it's about not compromising on those. Just don't do it.

"And never skimp on quality – the best basil and best olives makes the best Basil Pressed olive oil. It doesn't make it economical, but it makes it good.

"Always be willing to improve and never be too proud to listen. I think some of the best changes we've made have come from people telling us what they think is wrong with it. So don't wave it away, take note. Don't be afraid to learn and don't think you know it all.

"And most importantly, be passionate about quality. The people I've gone and seen internationally who had amazing oils, they were all really passionate.

"So if your heart's not in it, don't get into it. You've got to have your heart in it to actually enjoy it, and when you do that reflects in your oil."

"Last year got a medal for everything I entered. This year I'd like to get a Gold medal for everything I enter. That'd be a great benchmark."

More information:  
[www.riovista.olives.com.au](http://www.riovista.olives.com.au)

**Are you an AIOA 2020 winner? Send us a pic for our winners' gallery - [editor@olivegrower.com.au](mailto:editor@olivegrower.com.au).**





The TOP crew ready to head out on a mid-winter's morning during the 2020 harvest.

## Refining the art of processing brings TOP Best of Show success

The old adage that 'practice makes perfect' is certainly true for Rod Lingard and Katrina Bach, owners of New Zealand producer The Olive Press Limited. After more than two decades refining the craft of processing, the Olive Press' Pressed Gold Rosmarino Blu Toscano took out the coveted Best Flavoured Olive Oil of Show award (tied with SA's Rio Vista Olives) at the 2020 Australian International Olive Awards.

The Gold Rosmarino Blu Toscano scored a high-end 94 points from the judges among the strongest field of flavoured oil entries to

date, reflecting the increasingly popularity of the category. Further proving its versatility in quality production, The Olive Press also took two Gold medals in EVOO classes.

### 'TOP' in NZ too!

Known as TOP back home, The Olive Press has taken out the Best Processor accolade at the New Zealand EVOO Awards for a record seven years straight. Run by the national industry association, Olives New Zealand, the competition is the most significant and respected in the country, and the ongoing

achievement stunning by any standard for a relatively small commercial olive mill.

### Position and people

Managing director Katrina Bach says it helps that their modern, well-equipped operation is located in Wairarapa, New Zealand's leading region for quality EVOO production, and employs the best qualified staff including several from overseas. But mostly, she says, it's the long-standing customer relationships that have made all the difference.

"Our ability to produce exceptional EVOO

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Long-standing customer relationships are the backbone of TOP's business: Rod Lingard in the grove with Wairarapa producer Helen Meehan of Olivo.

year after year takes exceptional customers - people who understand that the very best oils are made in the grove, and who appreciate that we're there as their processing partner to ensure those fantastic aromas, flavours and other qualities are able to present themselves in the end product," Katrina said.

### Processing ... and more

Established 21 years ago as a toll operation for local growers, TOP currently processes around 550 tonnes of olives in a good season. Their customers range from very small to large, located across the bottom half of the North Island to the top half of the South Island.

More recently, TOP has expanded its operations to include grove management, bottling and labelling, and R&D on by-product development.

"Our need to improve financial viability while remaining committed to environmental sustainability has required us to both increase production and better manage our processing waste," Katrina said.

"This in turn has created some exciting R&D opportunities in by-product development through our research partners, enabling us to diversify our products and services.

"However, producing the best EVOO remains our fundamental mission and most important goal."

### Flavour pairing

As well as producing award-winning EVOOs for its many customers, TOP is a competition winner in its own right, mainly with its range of agrumato and infused flavoured oils. Katrina says the secret to

their success, as reflected by the Rosemary Agrumato in the AIOA competition this year, has been to focus not just on sourcing quality olives and ingredients but on pairing the chosen fruit or herb with the right host olive variety.

"While it's essential to have a basic understanding of the chemical properties involved and their interactions during processing, creating the best agrumato is ultimately more an art than a science," Katrina says.

"It's why we use a renown chef and IOC-accredited EVOO judge who's passionate about olives and food and loves making flavoured oils. Her speciality is blending finishing oils for other chefs and passionate cooks, drawing on a lifetime of knowledge and skill".

### Brand building success

Rod Lingard, TOP's chairman and Katrina's husband, says winning the Best Flavoured Oil award in both New Zealand and Australia is vitally important to their brand.

"Producing award-winning EVOOs and flavoured oils is a great way for TOP to showcase its processing expertise without being seen to compete with customers for retail shelf space," Rod said.

"Winning in Australia also carries with it the prestige of succeeding on the international stage which can only enhance our production credentials for high-quality oils back home".

### Cross-ditch collaboration

And while thrilled to win a coveted award in their first year of entry, Rod says their biggest

### Golden rules for processing quality

TOP's stellar record for high quality processing provides an opportunity for others, particularly those just starting out, so share in their 21 years of learning how to 'do it right'. Here are their Golden Rules for processing:

- Good customers are gold and the key to your success, so keep them safe.
- Don't compromise on processing standards or quality. Make the best oil you can - every time, and for every customer. They expect the best.
- Respect your customer's fruit and don't overwork it: remember, quality first.
- Best-practice hygiene is essential: never forget olive oil is food.
- The secret to the best agrumato is to use the best fruit and ingredients available.
- Don't be afraid to experiment, and be open to feedback.
- Do yourself a favour and attend an AOA Processor's Course. Pablo Canamasas is the best!
- Love what you do and be proud of your products - it shows.

buzz from 2020 was to be celebrated by the hosts, having only joined the Australian Olive Association the previous year.

"Like most Kiwis, we enjoy the fun of competing with our Australian neighbours,





Best-practice hygiene is one of the golden rules of TOP's operation, including steam cleaning of harvesters.



TOP's agrumato guru Rachel Priestley and Argentinian olive consultant Pablo Voitzuk practising their 'art', feeding yuzu skins into the hammermill for crushing with olives.

but we're probably more interested in collaborating to help make the AIOA the best international olive competition in this part of the world," he said.

Rod and Katrina believe collaboration, both between the two countries and within each country's market, is the only meaningful way the olive industry in this part of the world can work to address the looming challenges of climate change, global pandemics, disrupted markets and technological advancements.

"TOP was attracted to joining the AOA because of its collaborative approach to olive industry research and its willingness to share ideas and swap experiences," Rod said.

"That openness, and the great Aussie hospitality we received wherever we visited, made us feel very welcome during our Victorian grove tour and Albury national conference in 2019."

### Expanding demand

Back in New Zealand, Rod says TOP's focus on producing exceptional EVOO and providing the best customer service sees the company continuing to expand into grove management and oil-based food and product manufacturing.

"TOP's trick is to sell its oil and olive-based products without compromising its service and support for its processing customer base," he said. "Fortunately, the increasing demand post-COVID for locally-grown natural produce with reliable provenance is opening up opportunities for quality EVOO producers and olive product manufacturers to succeed at all levels of the market."

"We are working with our retail customers and food industry manufacturers to 'grow the pie' and promote the exceptional quality and flavour of New Zealand EVOO and olive products".

More information: [www.theolivepress.co.nz](http://www.theolivepress.co.nz).



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# Help to access harvest workers

*The ongoing restrictions around COVID-19 mean that harvest labour is likely to again be an issue this year. Luckily the problem is well-recognised and there's plenty of assistance to help you find harvest helpers. Here are some of the best options for up-to-date information.*

## MADEC is a good place to start

A national not-for-profit, community-based organisation, MADEC can assist with sourcing labour and subsidies for related expenses. MADEC: manages the National Harvest Labour Information Service and operates six Harvest Labour Offices; provides jobactive services across six large employment regions; is a recruitment services provider and approved employer for the Seasonal Worker Program; and is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) delivering accredited training in high priority industry areas.

More information: [www.madec.edu.au](http://www.madec.edu.au); [www.jobsearch.gov.au/harvest](http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/harvest).

## Labour sourcing programs

Specific labour sourcing programs available to access include:

### Seasonal Worker Program

The *Seasonal Worker Program* provides employers with reliable returning workers from Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste to meet unmet labour demands, for up to nine months. The experienced workers can then return for further seasons.

### Harvest Trail Information Service

The *Harvest Trail Information Service (HTIS)* connects workers and growers to fill seasonal farm jobs via the Harvest Trail website and call centre. If you are looking for seasonal farm workers, the HTIS can help you find them.

Note: the HTIS is provided at no cost to growers or workers, funded by the Australian Government and MADEC Australia.

### Harvest Trail Services

This year-round service supplies labour to major harvest areas seeking large numbers of workers. HTS staff liaise with growers and industry leaders and groups to: keep up with regional trends and needs; communicate with jobseekers around available facilities, transport and accommodation; and liaise with other labour services.

More information: Harvest Trail contact centre - 1800 062 332, or post seasonal farm jobs at [www.harvesttrail.gov.au](http://www.harvesttrail.gov.au).

## State-specific information

### New South Wales

The *Help Harvest NSW* website matches workers with seasonal farm/agribusiness employment opportunities during COVID-19. It provides information on areas requiring workers, links to agribusiness recruitment agencies and job boards, and resources including ag worker permits, SafeWork NSW, cross-border employment and harvest work relocation assistance.

More information: [www.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nsw.gov.au) and search for *help harvest nsw*.

### Queensland

The *#pickqld* program aims to connect workers with growers needing harvest labour. The *#pickqld* website provides information and links for employers including available incentives, and sets out their responsibilities for WH&S, and accommodating and transporting seasonal workers. It has updated information on border restrictions and exemptions, and access to the *SafeFood Queensland guidelines for reducing workforce impacts related to COVID-19*.

More information: [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) and search for *pickqld*.

### South Australia

The *Regional Work SA* website provides information around seasonal work, including incentives and assistance available for both



workers and employers, links to services for employers looking for workers, and relevant COVID-19 travel and workplace information.

Contact details for local RDA offices are also included, for information and access to the *Regional Workforce Co-ordination & Collaboration Program*.

More information: [www.regionalwork@sa.gov.au](http://www.regionalwork@sa.gov.au).

### Tasmania

The Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment website's Agriculture section houses information relating to seasonal labour and COVID-19 considerations.

The Harvest Job page provides information for employers including the Seasonal Worker Transport Pilot Program, along with links to updated regulations around interstate harvest workers.

The COVID-19 Help for Industry and Agricultural Businesses page provides links to practical guides and business support tools, including grants and stimulus programs, WH&S, and updated business and border restrictions.

Further information: [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au) and click on the Agriculture drop-down.

### Victoria

The *Big Victorian Harvest* program connects workers and employers for seasonal employment, providing information including links to current labour schemes and the *Working for Victoria* site.

There's also information on support for ag businesses, including the *Seasonal Workforce Industry Support* program, COVID-safe accommodation and transport, state and federal government financial help and other services.

More information: [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au) and search for *big victorian harvest*.

### Western Australia

The WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has developed the *COVID-19 support for our primary industries* page on the [wa.gov.au](http://wa.gov.au) website to provide an up to date practical response. Information and links include securing labour supply, COVID-19 safeguards for WHMs, and the *Primary Industries Workers Regional Travel and Accommodation Support Scheme*. The fact sheet *Recruitment options for agricultural workers in WA* outlines the potential pathways to source your seasonal workforce.

More information: [www.wa.gov.au](http://www.wa.gov.au) and search for COVID-19 support.





*R&D Insights* contains the latest levy-funded R&D project updates, research findings and related industry resources, which all happen under the Hort Innovation Olive Fund.

Hort Innovation partners with leading service providers to complete a range of R&D projects to ensure the long-term sustainability and profitability of the olive industry.

## AOA Healthy Soils Field Days break new ground

The first in the series of 2021 AOA Health Soils Field Days were held in February, with attendees at both events giving the program a resounding tick of approval.

A small but enthusiastic group of 12 olive producers, representing nine groves, attended the first successful event at Lentara Grove in the Tamar Valley, hosted by EVOO and table olive producers Martin and Sophie Grace. Participants travelled from across Tasmania, including Flinders Island and the Tamar Valley in the North to the Huon Valley and Bruny Island in the south of the state.

Two weeks later over 30 producers from across South Australia gathered at Peninsula Providore Farm/Nangkita Grove at Tooperang, where the second field day program was met with equal enthusiasm. Hosted by Mel Hollick and Brook Wyett, the event was a jam-packed day of information and learning, and included a hands-on (or rather, tractor-on) demonstration of compost-making, a lot of chain-sawing and even trench-digging.

### Prioritising productivity

The AOA is convening this series of ground-breaking field days, being held in major growing regions across Australia, with a refreshing 'in the field' demonstration approach. The events emphasise the important role of healthy soils in producing healthy trees and lifting grove productivity,



NSW soil guru John Barton was one of the keynote presenters at the Tasmanian field day.

a need made all too clear by recent industry statistics, says AOA OliveCare® Code of Best Practice Administrator Peter McFarlane.

"A 2019 AOA grower survey revealed that Australian grove productivity ranges from zero to 15 tonne/ha, with median production <1.0 tonne/ha and





Compost-making in action at the Nangkita grove field day.

an average production of 3.3 tonne/ha,” he said.

“This clearly demonstrates the low productivity of many groves in Australia, reflecting the need to urgently address important grove management issues.”

### Checking performance

The AOA is also utilising the field days to emphasise the value of benchmarking grove performance - setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for improved grove productivity and profitability, including:

- » Grove productivity KPIs: kg/tree, tonnes/ha
- » Cost of production: cost \$/tonne
- » Gross margin: \$/ha

Also discussed is the value of participating in the AOA's OliveCare® Best Practice Program, including the use of best practice management checklists, and access to technical time-critical management information.

### Grove walk and demonstrations

A significant element of each day's program is a grove walk covering important productivity topics, including practical demonstrations around a range of grove management issues. Those covered across the events include:

#### ■ Canopy Management

- » pruning for sunlight/shade pattern
- » pruning for tree row volume
- » pruning for harvest method
- » pruning for leaf/wood ratio
- » pruning as cultural practice for disease control
- » pruning for renewal
- » pruning for frost reduction
- » pruning for consistent production

#### ■ Use of temperature data loggers

#### ■ Soil health and leaf and soil nutrition monitoring

- » maintaining productive groves while streamlining nutrient requirements

- » managing applications of fertilisers to optimise plant uptake and minimise losses to run-off, leaching and/or gas emissions
- » when to take soil and leaf tests
- » fertiliser methods
- » improving soil biology and carbon in soils
- » building soil nitrogen and nitrogen fixation
- » soil amendments to correct sodic and acidic soils

#### ■ Making and using compost

- » composting
- » compost recipe
- » compost application rates

#### ■ Soil water

- » collecting more water
- » holding more water
- » giving back more water

#### ■ Soil carbon

- » living carbon
- » simple carbon





The in-grove pruning demonstration with grove expert Andrew Taylor was a huge learning curve for SA field day participants.

- » complex carbon
- » how we lose soil carbon
- » how we can build soil carbon
- » how to keep soil carbon
- » measuring soil carbon

### Informed and inspired

Field day participants have variously described the field day experience as 'awesome' and 'best field day ever', with the opportunity to clarify issues with the expert presenters cited among the most valuable elements. The benefits possible from the relatively simple and financially viable practices outlined are also seeing many keen to action what they learned in their own groves.

Inspired by the Tasmanian field day, Martin and Sophie are commencing a comprehensive tree skirting program to improve airflow through the grove, which will assist with frost management as well as pest and disease management.

They have also decided to undertake major regeneration pruning on one of their blocks, both to bring down the



Andrew Taylor likens pruning to navigating, looking to the sun for guidance.



Grove consultant Andrew Taylor says learning about the soil you're starting with is the first step along the path to soil improvement and health.



Q&A sessions at the end of each field day are invaluable for consolidating the information shared throughout the day.

height of the trees and produce more young fruit wood.

These prunings will be chipped and used together with olive processing waste (along with some high nitrogen local animal manure) to commence a composting program at Lentara Grove.

Nangkita Grove owners Mel and Brook have already commenced a major pruning renewal program of their 17,000-trees, and are now even more convinced of the value of in-grove mulching of the prunings to return valuable carbon and nutrients to the soil.

They will also be ramping up last year's composting of their processing waste with other organic matter (particularly with a greatly increased crop on the trees, and therefore greater oil production this year), and are keen to trial the use of biological products to increase microbial soil activity.

### Future progress

Lentara Grove is also a field day site for the AOA National Olive Industry Conference in October, so it will be interesting to see how these initiatives have progressed.

It will also be interesting to hear what other Healthy Soil Field Day participants have been inspired to do with their field day learnings, and to track the results over coming years.

The final field day will be held on 28 March at Preston Valley Grove, Lowden, WA and at the time of print total program registration numbers were nearing 150, marking another highly successful series of industry learning and knowledge sharing events.

**This project has been funded by Hort Innovation, using the Hort Innovation olive research and development levy, co-investment from the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government.**





## Boort Processing Workshop postponed to 2022

**The annual Boort Processing Workshop has been one of the stand-out events of recent years, providing participants with in-depth knowledge and hands-on experience around the quality aspects of olive oil processing.**

The comprehensive multi-day workshop combines the technical expertise of international processing consultant Pablo Canamasas with the practical experience of award-winning producers Peter and Marlies Eicher, of Salute Oliva. It is held over two full days in Boort, Victoria, the first working through the theoretical and technical information and the second spent hands-in Salute Oliva's processing facility. All up, it's an opportunity to learn how to get the best quality EVOO possible when processing - from some of the best in the industry.

The AOA had hoped to be able to run

the program again this year, however the continuing ban on international travel due to COVID-19 has deemed this impossible. The event's reliance on harvest timing for the practical element means the necessary April timing is just too soon to see any likely lifting of the travel restrictions, meaning Pablo almost certainly won't be able to get back to Australia for the workshop.

So for those hoping to attend this year, please hold tight and keep posted for news on the next Boort processing workshop, now planned for 2020. With a three-year hiatus between events, it's sure to sell out fast and places are limited, so you'll want to register stat!

We'll bring you updates in future editions of R&D Insights as plans progress.

## ... meanwhile, webinars provide foundations

As proven so well throughout 2020, the AOA has become expert at pivoting around the challenges of the pandemic, so the foundations of the processing workshop program are still being presented this year via a short series of online webinars.

"While we can't hold a physical workshop in 2021, we realise that the event is an integral part of our industry's continuing knowledge sharing program and an important element for many in increasing the quality of their processing output," AOA CEO Greg Seymour said.

"So we decided to cover the foundation learnings via two pre-season processing webinars, once again utilising the Zoom platform to bring Pablo Canamasas' expertise to Australian producers."

The first webinar, *Pre-season Considerations for EVOO Processing*, was held on 10 March and focused on preparation for best quality EVOO production. Topics covered included:

- Harvest plan considerations
- Factors that may alter the harvest plan

- Processing plan considerations
- Staff aspects
- Processing documents

The second webinar, *Technical Aspects of Olive Oil Extraction*, will be held on 25 March and will cover how to manage the extraction process in relation to the varying attributes of the fruit at harvest.

The format for both is a 30-minute presentation, followed by a 30-minute interactive Q&A session with Canamasas, providing plenty of opportunity for people to clarify particular queries or issues they may have.

### Missed out?

For those who may have missed the first webinar and/or can't make it to the second, each is being recorded and will be made available for viewing on the *OliveBiz* website.

Attendees can re-visit the sessions as part of their registration, others will need to register to obtain a link and login details.

Separate registration for each session is necessary, with the cost just \$20 plus GST for levy payers and \$40 plus GST for non-levy payers.

Find out more and register at [www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au) - Events - Calendar - 2021 Soil Field Days or contact Liz Bouzoudis via email, [secretariat@australianolives.com.au](mailto:secretariat@australianolives.com.au), or phone 0478 606 145

This webinar series is part of the Olive levy project *Australian olive industry communications and extension program (OL18000)*, funded by Hort Innovation, using the Hort Innovation olive research and development levy, co-investment from the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government.



### Webinar presenter: Pablo Canamasas

Pablo Canamasas lives in Argentina and is an agricultural scientist specialising in olive oil production and oil quality.

He has wide-ranging international experience in the design and development of olive oil processing facilities and in the continual improvement of their industrial efficiencies.

Pablo consults on olive oil production to companies in more than 10 countries across the globe, and is a regular senior olive oil judge and panel leader for many international olive competitions, including the Australian International Olive Awards.

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# Inaugural OWI Achievement Award to Dr Selina Wang

The Olive Wellness Institute (OWI) has presented its inaugural award for achievement in olive science research to Dr Selina Wang, research director at the University of California Davis (UC Davis) Olive Center.

Also a Co-operative Extension specialist in the Department of Food Science and Technology, Dr Wang's name will already be familiar to many *Olivegrower & Processor* readers: keen to spread the science around olive oil far and wide – particularly around myth-busting - she has generously shared several important research articles with our readers in recent years.

Dr Wang was nominated for the OWI Achievement Award by recently retired Director of the UC Davis Olive Center Dan Flynn, who many readers would also know from his presentations at the 2011 AOA Olive Industry Conference in Wangaratta.

"Dr Wang stands among the very best people I have worked with," Flynn said.

"Her independent and significant research achievements, skill at attracting financial backing and resources, ability to inspire students, robust work ethic, dedication to the public interest and exceptional interpersonal skills place her among the noteworthy olive scientists globally."

## Dr Selina Wang

With a PhD in Physical Organic Chemistry, Dr Wang joined the Olive Center as a postdoctoral researcher in 2010. She then became the Research Director in 2011, leading the center's research efforts in olive oil quality, authenticity and standardisation.

She took on her Co-operative Extension duties in 2018, continuing her work with olives and olive oil but also covering other crops significant to California.

## Introduction to olives

Dr Wang said she first became involved with olive research after



obtaining her PhD, connecting her chemistry knowledge with her passion for food science.

"At the same time, the UC Davis Olive Center was founded and was looking for a chemist to analyze olive oil quality and authenticity. I was interested in the research and inspired by the mission of the Center, so I joined them," she said.

## Greatest research achievements

"I'm proud of our continuous work in olive oil quality, authenticity and standardisation, while also providing scientific knowledge to industries and the general public.

"Our research was part of the scientific basis for the establishment of the Californian *2018-2019 Grade and Labeling Standards For Olive Oil, Refined-Olive Oil and Olive-Pomace Oil*. The standards require producers of greater than 5,000 gallons/year to test every batch of oil produced, ensuring they meet high quality parameters and thereby instilling confidence in consumers."

## Olive Wellness Institute Achievement Award

The Olive Wellness Institute Achievement Award is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate olive science related research achievements, and to thank the recipients for their contribution to research.

The annual Achievement Award is awarded to the most significant contributor to olive science or olive related research in the past 5-10 years.

## Future research and plans

The really good news for the olive industry is that Dr Wang is keen to continue that work into the future.

"I'm looking forward to doing further research on maximizing quality, health benefits, yield and sustainability, both in the field and during processing," she said.

"We've made a tremendous amount of progress in the past decade, and there's more work to be done, especially in response to climate change. I will continue extensions with the growers and processors we work with, and educational activities with the students at UC Davis, who are the future leaders of the industry."

Additional source information: [www.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ucdavis.edu).



## AOA grove management videos now online

The AOA's wide range of grower resources has just expanded even further, with the addition of a series of grove management videos now available on the *OliveBiz* website.

Covering topics including pruning, weather stations, making compost, remote sensing and automation, the videos are short, sharp and practical, providing valuable information to help better manage your grove.

Series 'producer' Peter McFarlane said the original plan had been to video presentations at the SA Soils Field Day scheduled for mid-2020 to produce the resources.

"When we had to postpone the field days in 2020, we immediately revamped our plans and arranged to go ahead and produce the videos anyway. We'd identified that these were really useful topics to cover and had no idea when we might be able to get people together in the grove again," McFarlane said.

"So we spent two days filming, at various locations and with a range of expert presenters and grove owners. From that we were able to produce a set of videos which provide really useful reference information and are complementary to the field days.

"They cover some of the aspects explored in the field days, along with other really relevant topics, so whether you attended the field days or not, there's now information you can go back to and visit from time to time – or discover when you have the time.

### Wide-ranging, relevant topics

"There's discussion and demonstration around renovation and maintenance pruning; remote sensing for weather, irrigation and other automated functions, including frost protection and bore levels; composting and making compost; and other producer-related issues like running a farm shop and olive oil storage.

"The videos range from seven to 14 minutes in length, so are a really convenient resource, particularly when you want to know more about something that's happening in your own grove. You're not always focussed on a topic when you read or see something about it but then suddenly you have the problem, or need some guidance on how to do something, and you really need the information right then.

"As they say, things are only relevant when you think they're relevant, so having these resources available all the time means people can access them when they need them."

AOA 2021 grove management video presentations:

- Principles of Canopy Management/Tree Pruning - Andrew Taylor, Pendleton Estate (7.5 mins)
- Weather Stations, Remote Sensing and Automation - Jon Lockwood and Tass Peters, OneTemp; Mel Hollock, Nangkita Grove/ Peninsula Providore (14 mins)



Video producer Rory Noke filming Andrew Taylor at Pendleton Estate's Coonalpyn Olive Grove.

- Making Compost - Peter Wadewitz, Peats Soils (7 mins)

### Access resources

The grove management videos can be accessed from the *Projects* section of the *OliveBiz* website – [www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au) – under Comms Project, where you'll also find additional resources covering a wide range of topics and events.

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This project has been funded by Hort Innovation, using the Hort Innovation olive research and development levy, co-investment from the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government.





Dr. Rohan Kimber (SARDI) launching Sentinel 4 deployment at Thorndon Park Produce in Virginia, South Australia.

## High-tech plant pest and disease surveillance units deployed

*In the September 2020 edition, we introduced iMapPESTS, a five-year project aimed at providing a framework for a co-ordinated cross-industry system to rapidly monitor and report the presence of high-priority airborne pests and diseases. Three new mobile surveillance units have been trialled and optimised for in-field trials throughout the country over 2021, bringing the suite to a total of six units. The sentinels will capture airborne samples that are examined to identify high priority pests and pathogens for reporting to industry. Project communicator Shakira Johnson provides a project update.*

The iMapPESTS: Sentinel Surveillance for Agriculture program is researching and developing smart surveillance and cutting-edge diagnostic technologies. These include custom-designed mobile surveillance units ('sentinels') that incorporate specialised airborne trapping equipment and technology. Sentinels are deployed to various locations around the country to capture airborne samples that are examined in a laboratory to test the presence or absence of priority pests and pathogens.

In a unique collaboration utilising the latest technologies, Australia's agriculture and horticulture industries have joined forces to develop a national surveillance system capable of rapidly monitoring and reporting the presence of airborne pests and diseases for multiple agricultural sectors, including viticulture, grains, cotton, sugar, forestry and horticulture.

### Construction and deployment

iMapPESTS completed the construction of six sentinels in early 2021. The fourth sentinel in the suite of six was delivered at the end of October 2020 to South Australia. It was deployed in its maiden trial at Anthony De Ieso's Thorndon Park Produce vegetable growing operation in the northern Adelaide Plains, before being deployed at Cobbledick Produce in the Adelaide Hills. Sentinels 5 and 6 were delivered to iMapPESTS HQ at the Waite Campus in Adelaide in early 2021 for initial testing and optimisation of the new units. Throughout the year, these six sentinels will be deployed to different growing regions around the country for extensive testing and optimisation.

### Sentinel features

Every sentinel looks unique but all six share similar features: each is equipped with

several airborne samplers, power supply, a weather station, telemetry and an industrial computer for remote control and monitoring. They also include automated technology to configure samplers for different sampling requirements.

The new edition units, Sentinels 4, 5, and 6, are smarter, smaller, lighter and more flexible compared with earlier sentinels, which is particularly important in a period where movement of people and goods can change quickly, and especially important for responsiveness to biosecurity incursions.

As iMapPESTS nears the end of the initial sentinel development stage, this year the project team will aim to focus on deploying all six sentinels to multiple strategic locations across the country for in-field trialling. Each trial gives the team the opportunity to engage with stakeholders in the region and deliver important pest and disease



**Sentinels 1, 2, and 3 undergoing optimisation and trialling at SARDI's Waite campus in Adelaide.**

data that could help inform on-farm pest management actions, biosecurity response efforts and area freedom claims.

"The sentinel will help us be more efficient on-farm," South Australian vegetable grower Anthony De Ieso, of Thorndon Park Produce, said.

"The information will offer insights into the patterns of insect pest numbers and how weather may be influencing their movement, allowing us to make informed pest management decisions."

## Next generation diagnostics gears up over 2021

Molecular testing can deal with large numbers of samples rapidly and accurately, yet molecular tests for many of the pests and pathogens do not yet exist. The iMapPESTS project includes the development of more diagnostic tests using next-generation sequencing by AgVic, Sugar Research Australia and University of Queensland.

The iMapPESTS diagnostics collaboration is exploring a method known as high throughput sequencing (HTS) to investigate ways of reporting on a wider range of insects captured, including targets of biosecurity concern. The HTS approach takes a sample of insects or fungi captured by the trap and sucks out all the genetic code, resulting in a 'DNA soup' that can be scanned using a reference tool, or database, of known DNA codes for hundreds of thousands of different insects or fungal species. If a particular species was trapped, its DNA code will be present in the soup and flagged by the reference database, indicating its presence in the trap.

These techniques have the potential to detect many targets in one test and pick-up biosecurity threats early, allowing for a more effective response to an incursion.

To further investigate the impact of this new diagnostics method and how it might work in the iMapPESTS surveillance system, a selection of insect samples from the sentinels are being processed at AgVic's AgriBio using their HTS diagnostic



**Elisse Nogarotto and Dr. Francesco Martoni (AVR) performing high throughput diagnostics trials using Next Generation Sequencing at AgriBio, Melbourne.**

method. The results can be accessed on the iMapPESTS website.

## iMapPESTS website: central information hub for industry

Alongside the deployment of Sentinel 4 to Thorndon Park Produce in October 2020, a new-look iMapPESTS website was launched. The new site includes an interactive map of locations for current and previous sentinel trials that will take you to individual trial pages where stakeholders can interrogate the data collected for insects and pathogens trapped at a particular site.

During sentinel trials, data is regularly shared through these pages as summaries and observations from iMapPESTS entomologists, plant pathologists and local service providers (crop consultants, agronomists, etc) and a data dashboard that features weather (temperature, rainfall and humidity), pest and pathogen counts.

## Project aim

By the end of the project in 2022, the team hopes to have a demonstrated a proof-of-concept surveillance system that is suitable to different regions and supported by the appropriate rapid diagnostic tests for key insect pests and pathogens across industry sectors.

The iMapPESTS team will work with growers and industry representatives to understand the best way to communicate and visualise the dynamic pest and pathogen information for end-users. Growers and those involved in plant pest management are encouraged to visit the iMapPESTS website for more information, or to get in touch.

Sub-header: Find out more

For more information, please contact iMapPESTS Engagement and Adoption Co-ordinator Shakira Johnson on 0433 937 564 or [shakira.johnson@ausveg.com.au](mailto:shakira.johnson@ausveg.com.au).

Further details can also be found at the iMapPESTS website - [www.imappests.com.au](http://www.imappests.com.au) - and you can follow the project on Twitter - @iMapPESTS.

*The iMapPESTS program (2017-2023) is supported by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited, through funding from the Australia Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment as part of its Rural R&D for Profit Program and Grains Research & Development Corporation, Sugar Research Australia, Cotton Research & Development Corporation, Wine Australia, AgriFutures Australia, and Forest and Wood Products Australia.*



# Biosecurity essentials: a magnifying lens and other tools

*Having the right biosecurity practices in place is essential for every grove and property owner, as is an action plan should a pest or disease incursion occur. And to ensure you can efficiently identify when that happens, you've got to have the right diagnostic tools on hand. All growers who attended last year's national IPDM field days were provided with arguably the most important tool, a magnifying lens, an item Plant Health Australia says "should be part of your biosecurity toolkit".*

You've all seen them, right? Nice photos of pests you've been asked to keep an eye out for. But when you actually take a closer look, you realise they would be much smaller in real life.

Plant Health Australia's Rod Turner warns people not to be fooled by the enlarged photos of pests in fact sheets, or think they'd be that easy to spot.

"The small size of your average pest isn't going to make it easy for you find it, let alone see it in enough detail to identify it. They are often much smaller than you realise," Turner said.

## Handheld magnifying lens

That's what makes a handheld magnifying lens an essential part of any biosecurity toolkit.

"If the full-grown adult pest is less than a millimetre in length, the eggs, newly hatched larvae or young adults will be even smaller.

"If you need to look at mouth parts, the tail end, or characteristic spots on wings or something like that you are definitely going to need about 5 to 10x magnifying lens."

Jewellers or watchmakers 'loupes' are available for 10 times magnification. Some include a light so they can be used in low light situations.

And Turner said being asked to spot something different compared to your usual suspects might not be that simple.

"It's a big ask to identify some of these pests, and even if your eyes are pretty good it's worth investing in a magnifying lens so you don't overlook anything important."

## Macro photo lens ... and other tools

If you do find something unusual, a macro lens that attaches to a mobile phone so that you can take a photo of it is a really useful thing to have on hand.

A cutting knife or pair of secateurs, depending on what you are looking for and where, are useful too. You may not be able to get a good shot in-situ, so being able to



Growers who attended last year's national IPDM field days each took home arguably the most important diagnostic tool, a magnifying lens.

***"A magnifying lens of some sort and a macro lens for a mobile device to take photos should be part of your biosecurity toolkit"***

carefully remove the pest on the foliage will enable you to take a clear and informative shot.

## Taking photos

Generally, the normal camera on your mobile device should be used to get a broader view of the situation, along with a photo of the overall damage to the plant and/or the number of pests. This can be useful when trying to identify a pest or disease.

Remember: clearer photos will help identify the problem and do so more quickly.

The Farm Biosecurity website - [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au) - has some simple tips to help you take great, useful photos, along with a downloadable factsheet providing tips for taking photos with a macro lens.

Source: [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/biosecurity-essentials-a-magnifying-lens](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/biosecurity-essentials-a-magnifying-lens) (edited). This information is reproduced under Creative Commons licence 3.0 - [www.creativecommons.org](http://www.creativecommons.org).



## Best Practice Series

The OliveCare® program is all about helping olive producers achieve quality. With that aim, the Best Practice Series of articles discusses how to increase the yield of premium EVOO through best practice management strategies from the grove to the consumer.

# Spotlight on Anthracnose

The current La Niña weather pattern has turned the production outlook around for many growers, turning dry, dusty groves green and giving trees much-needed moisture. Trees are looking healthy and the 2021 crop for most is looking incredibly promising.

There's still a while between now and harvest, however, and the continuing La Niña rains also raise a red flag for Anthracnose. Here's a timely reminder of what to be aware of, and the action needed, in your grove.

### Anthracnose (*Colletotrichum* sp.)

Olive Anthracnose is the most important fungal disease of olives worldwide. It occurs in humid olive-growing areas of many production countries and causes both heavy yield losses and lowering of oil quality. Anthracnose is a moderate to major problem in Australia, depending on local climatic factors.

### Symptoms

Causes soft circular rots on fruit and at high humidity produces an orange coloured slimy mass of spores on fruit surface. This is commonly observed close to harvest when the fruit softens.

### Transmission

Favoured by wet conditions with high humidity, the Anthracnose fungus survives on infected mummified fruit. Spores are spread by rain splash and wind, and ripe fruit can be infected from new spores within four days.

### Latent infections

To check if you have a latent Anthracnose infection in your grove, collect fruit samples in a plastic bag, add a little water and place in a warm location in your home or shed for a few days. If present, this will incubate the spores and development of slimy orange spore masses on the olive skin will become evident.



Images: Vera Sergeeva

### Impact

Anthracnose-infected flowers can lead to reduced fruit quality and premature fruit drop that reduces yield. When processed, the diseased fruit produce a turbid and acidic (high FFA) reddish oil of poor quality (defects: musty/humid/grubby); the oil will generally be downgraded to a quality less than EVOO standard. Anthracnose is also problematic for table olives, impacting both taste and appearance.

### Control

It is recommended that protective copper sprays be applied ahead of anticipated wet and/or high humidity weather conditions.

After harvest, remove all mummified fruit from trees and cover fallen fruit and leaf trash with compost, wood chips or manure to prevent water splash reinfecting the new growth.





## Pest and disease control: increase health and spray less

*Rather than just go in hard with chemicals to deal with pest and disease issues, as an industry we're increasingly looking to integrated pest and disease management (IPDM) in our groves. Combining the use of biological, cultural and chemical practices, IPDM can save time and money, and benefits the environment. Here's a run-down on the basic practices, with an emphasis on safe spraying.*

### Happy = healthy

Remember that 'happy trees are healthy trees' so keeping trees in optimal condition is the starting point. Strong trees in good health can handle minor pest and disease incursions without serious affects, therefore more serious infestations and disease outbreaks may indicate your grove is under stress.

There are many causes for tree stress, some of which you may be able to control - lack of water, soil nutrient deficiencies, overgrown tree canopy, natural beneficial organisms - while others are in the hands of Mother Nature, like humid weather.

Reducing tree stress and increasing the health of your trees with good pruning, nutrition and irrigation regimes will go a long way in also reducing the negative effects of pests and disease in your grove.

### Monitor and act quickly

Check your trees regularly and act at the first signs of infestation or damage. Caught early, an incursion can often be controlled

before it spreads and sprays will be more effective. Ongoing monitoring in your grove will save you time and money in the long run - and just as importantly, reduce potential crop loss from damage to your trees.

### Spray carefully

In the case of a severe incursion necessitating chemical intervention, if you must spray:

#### **Understand pest and disease life-cycles and time spraying accordingly:**

- will spraying be effective now?
- is spraying really necessary or can I increase the resistance - and therefore reduce the problem - by increasing the health of my trees?
- can I limit to spot-sprays?
- when do I spray again - what are critical life cycle times?

#### **Understand the spray, how it works and its effects – including on your products:**

- does it kill beneficial insects - even if it is organic?
- is it legal in my state?
- ... and for use on olives?



You can check the list of chemicals approved for use on olives on the AOA website - [www.australianolives.com.au/chemical-permits](http://www.australianolives.com.au/chemical-permits).



## BIOGRAS L INCREASING YIELD

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# Focus Groves achieve larger crops, higher quality and yields

*This report outlines the status and practices of the groves taking part in the continuing Olives New Zealand Focus Grove Project. It includes observations by project consultant Stuart Tustin, information from grove owners and discussions with attendees, during the third round of Focus Grove Visits and Field Days held last October.*

## **Northland: Olives on the Hill** - Chris and Linda Smith

One of the original Focus Groves, *Olives on the Hill* has seen continuous improvement to overall grove health and increased grove production - in 2020, an average of 16kg/tree and 16% oil yield. The Northland regional averages were 10.92kg and 17.1% respectively.

The productivity trend at *Olives on the Hill* is for increasing harvest tonnage and oil yield percentage. In 2020 there was a 66% increase in tonnage from nine to 15 tons, and an oil yield increase of 86% from 1400L to 2600L – so, greater than the fruit increase. There was also a 3-10-fold increase in polyphenols.

These results represent multiple gains: higher oil yields of higher quality oil from larger crops.

Unusually dry weather had meant a reduction in the spray regime in autumn, however disease control spraying commenced earlier than usual due to improved machinery access in the drier winter/spring soil conditions. As a result, *Olives on the Hill* mostly kept to the 21-days rule for protective disease management. The previous soil test had shown only Boron was needed for nutrition and this was included in the spray just preceding bloom.

The Frantoio and half the Leccino had been pruned before the field day, with the remaining Leccino and the Ascolano to be done in the next month. The early stage flowering appeared light on the Frantoio and conversely heavy on the Leccino, with the pruning regime being adapted to the respective flowering responses.

Stuart Tustin noted that *Olives on the Hill* is now close to the objectives of the Focus Grove Project, with the last phase of tree restructuring being completed this year. The grove provides excellent proof that when the grove improvement regimes are followed, both fruit yield and oil yields are increasing by greater proportions.

## **Hawke's Bay: Aquiferra** - Bob Marshall and Shona Thompson

*Aquiferra* was one of the previous Focus Groves and is regarded as exemplary, again leading grove production nationally. The 2020 average harvest was 21kg/tree, with a 19% oil yield, compared with regional averages of 14.65kg and 16.6% respectively.

The *Aquiferra* grove is 18 years old and 2020 was an “on” year. It was irrigated all summer through severe drought, which also caused difficulties in fruit removal at harvest. Up to 15kg was left on trees, around 30% of the estimated crop load, and the drought also delayed ripening. However, some varieties produced up to 50% higher yield and the total production was 20% higher than previously recorded.

It was noted that in Hawke's Bay irrigated groves got great yields but those without irrigation had yields as low as 5%.

There are typically 18 sprays of Manzate applied to the grove per year, with Protek included in three over flowering to prevent Anthracnose. A refinement is to make the first Protek application just prior to flowering for improved control. Boron should also be added at this time to improve fruit set.

Note: Focus Grove oil testing has shown zero Manzate residue.

New research has highlighted *Serenade Optimum* for Anthracnose control in organic groves. A bio-fungicide/bactericide for control and suppression of a range of diseases across a wide range of horticultural crops, it is suitable for use in organic production systems and has BioGro certification. It is exempt from residues and has no



**The Neudorf grove has responded well to the major pruning and spray program.**

withholding period.

Stuart noted that flowers were just becoming visible and indications were for a good return bloom. No disease was present and the remnants of the scale infestation now appeared to be controlled.

There was discussion around strip spraying and the need to remove weeds to reduce competition for water: cultivation of the soil as an alternative is not recommended; Glyphosate application can be limited to two per year; the width of the spray strip can be reduced to inside the feeder root zone/outer canopy edge; mowing/line-weeding is a possible alternative method of control in the tree row soil strip.

It was noted that roots are intermingled across the grove when trees are mature.

### *Fertilisation/irrigation*

Magnesium is used by the tree in ripening and therefore is an important component. It is commonly deficient in NZ soils and can be corrected by soil and foliar application. However, any fertiliser application should only be done after leaf analysis (to correct issues). The ideal pH ideal for olive groves is 6-6.5 and the pH affects the soil's solubility of other minerals.

Fertigation was noted as expensive to set up compared with solid fertiliser applications. It was discussed that nutrient uptake depended on available water solution in the soils, hence the value of good irrigation.

The common belief that roots will grow towards irrigation water zones was discussed as being not correct: Israeli studies developing drip irrigation techniques showed that roots only move towards water zones preferentially when the water supply is enriched with nutrients - i.e. fertigation, not just irrigation.

As a means of rationing water, irrigation can be reduced or withheld during the two/three weeks of pit hardening with no negative effect on fruit growth, which does not occur at this time.

Mulching weed strips will improve soil organic matter and provide some water retention benefits. However applying green (un-decomposed) mulch consumes nitrogen as it composts in place and is not recommended.





Stuart Tustin talked attendees through the process of determining the next cuts to be made.



New growth from a major cut in the Kakariki grove, where tree restructuring is still continuing.

**Nelson: Kakariki Olives, Redwood Valley** - Ray and Brenda Gregory

*Another of the original Focus Groves, Kakariki is exemplary, showing outstanding improvement in grove health and increased production. In 2020 the grove produced on average 13kg/tree and 17% yield, compared with the regional averages of 9.27kg and 16.8% respectively.*

Kakariki's tree restructuring continues, with the challenge of minimising production loss for the commercial grove. Some large limbs have been retained as a result but will be dealt with in time.

There was a difficulty with machine harvesting this year, with an estimated 30% of the possible crop left on the trees. It was not cost effective to go back and hand harvest.

Since harvest there has been less rain than usual so the full Manzate spray program has resumed, resulting in excellent disease control. As many trees are still tall, however, there are concerns about spray reach and an upgrade of their sprayer technology may be needed.

While early in the season, with flower buds just emerging, the grove looked to have a good return flowering.

It was noted that there was a major fertiliser investment over 2020, based on soil test results. The applications have been split over September and January, taking account of the soil type's low nutrient retention capacity.

**Neudorf Olives, Upper Moutere** - Susan Pine

*This grove is utilising an alternative approach, following the Focus Grove pruning recommendations but limiting the Manzate spray program to monthly applications. In 2020 Neudorf harvested on average of 10kg/tree, with 17% oil yield.*

The big winter prune at Neudorf had just been completed, with the trees well set up for hand harvesting. Tree structure is managed for hand harvesting, so lower, flatter canopies of multiple pendant weaker limbs are trained.

Stuart suggested removing some layering of older 'underneath' shaded branches to reduce the bushy canopies, improving both hand harvesting and disease control, but noted the grove is looking really good. There has been good disease control, with the dark green leaves showing that the regime of mostly foliar-applied nutrients is working.

He also noted that the grove management improvements have not caused any short-term reductions in production.

**Canterbury: Terrace Edge, Waipara** - Bruce and Jill Chapman

*Another of the original Focus Groves, Terrace Edge faces challenges in following the recommendations yet has managed to produce double the average harvest for the Canterbury region. The 2020 harvest was on average 11kg/tree with 14% yield, while the Canterbury regional average*

*harvest was 5.44kg/tree and the same yield.*

The day commenced with a round table discussion of the opportunities for moving towards a more biologically compatible approach to grove management ('organic' farming). The Terrace Edge vineyard is organic and they are keen to move the olive grove in the same direction.

Stuart provided wide-ranging advice on soil management and appropriate spray regimes, including clarification of the organic sulphur-plus copper organic disease control regime and organic control of anthracnose.

The gathering then moved to the grove to observe the results of the pruning cuts made at the last field day, and determine the next steps. The chosen trees had all responded well, with new growth near the pruning points, and attendees were also able to observe the traps that can arise from failing to make the hard decisions: failing to completely remove a mature branch leads to bare centres and new fruit growing from further up the tree, while the best cuts encouraged regrowth from near the trunk.

This was a timely reminder that, in trying to preserve a harvest from mature branches, you can impede and delay the development of young branches on old trunks. The crop will also too high to be caught in the harvester's net.

Stuart said that the grove is well pruned, with the trees being close to ideal, however regrowth needs stimulating. There was less disease apparent but the heavy scale infestation persists. An application of Applaud in spring was recommended.

At this early stage flowering looked to be adequate.

**Wairarapa: Leafyridge, Masterton** - Craig and Ruth Leaf-Wright

*Leafyridge is one of the original Focus Groves and has followed an aggressive pruning regime to get the trees back into shape and size. While initially impacting on harvest tonnage, the benefits are now becoming apparent: the 2020 harvest averaged 18kg/tree and 15% yield, compared with the Wairarapa regional average of 7.06kg and 13% respectively.*

It was evident that the Frantoio and Leccino trees in the front field had responded well to the additional fertiliser program as a result of the soil test analysis, as they produced an average of 25kgs+/tree this year.

Regrowth as a result of opening the canopy was also most impressive and the overall health of the trees was markedly improved, with abundant leaf and little evidence of any disease. Flowers are emerging and indications are for a very good return crop.

Following minor Anthracnose detected in the early flowering Manzanilla, the plan was to apply Protek a week earlier than usual and prior to flowering. Stuart agreed with this approach, which will be monitored for effectiveness and reflected in a fact sheet update.



The Olives on The Hill trees are looking great, with buds appearing alongside very healthy leaves.

#### On-site processing plant

Leafyridge has recently installed its own processing plant and noted the huge benefits: convenience, control and speed of fruit to processing, and also the ability to hand harvest the remaining fruit on machine-harvested trees. An estimated 30% of the potential crop was left behind by the machine and follow-up harvesting had recovered another 15kg from many trees, with some trees eventually yielding up to 40kg.

#### Bella Olea, near Greytown - Chris and Hilary Penman

The Penmans are following an organic approach and are well on their way to full certification. The heavy pruning regime at Bella Olea resulted in a small harvest for 2020, which was supplemented by fruit from another grove.

The restructured pruning program at Bella Olea is going well and regenerated growth is generally good, with a big flowering evident.

A new spray regime had been implemented comprising monthly applications of *Bacillus subtilis* with other biologicals and foliar fertiliser. Disease presence was still extensive but it is early in the new spray regime; the key factor for the next 12 months will be how it works and what, if any, adaptation is required. Chris will investigate the strain of *Bacillus subtilis* used in his spray mix to compare with the strain that is used for the product Serenade, as this is a possible difference which may influence disease management.

Understory management is effectively done by lamb grazing and is possible because no copper sprays are used in the organic disease management. Sheep also eat the fallen leaves, reducing the disease carryover on the ground, and perform 'biological' nutrient distribution as a consequence of grazing.

#### General comments: harvest 2020 - Gayle Sheridan, EO

The 2020 harvest year was very disappointing for the majority of groves, 25% down on 2019 (also a low year) and 50% down on 2018. A number of factors contributed: a promising flowering did not translate into a good fruit set; drought conditions in many regions resulted in small fruit and/or fruit drop; then slow ripening. These factors were then compounded by harvesting issues for a number of groves.

However, those groves following the Focus Grove recommendations for a regimented spray program and fairly aggressive pruning program substantially out-performed other groves in their region. Further information on the 2020 harvest can be found in the 2020 Grove Census Harvest Data Report, available on the Olives New Zealand website.

	2018	2019	2020
Aquiferra	28	18	21
HAWKE'S BAY	22	4	4
Olives on the Hill	28.6	8.7	16
NORTHLAND	3.7	2	4.6
Kakariki	15	18.6	13
Neudorf		8.5	10.6
NELSON	4	18.6	5.8
Terrace Edge	1	5.8	11
CANTERBURY	1	1.8	1.7
Leafyridge	25	8	25
WAIRARAPA	6	3	3

#### Harvest data comparisons

The following table shows Focus Grove Frantoio kg/tree compared to the regional average. Note: Frantoio was the variety initially used as the project 'trial blocks'.



One of the original Focus Groves, Kakariki has seen an outstanding improvement to grove health and increased production from its rejuvenated trees.

#### Summary

All of the original Focus Groves visited during the field days that have followed the recommended pro-active disease and canopy management program have reached an exemplary stage. For other groves following the recommendations, the results are apparent in both harvest tonnage and overall grove health.

Vastly improved tree health is apparent across all of the groves visited, with very little or no disease and plenty of lush leaf. Tree structure has also dramatically improved, enabling light and spray penetration and ease of effective harvest.

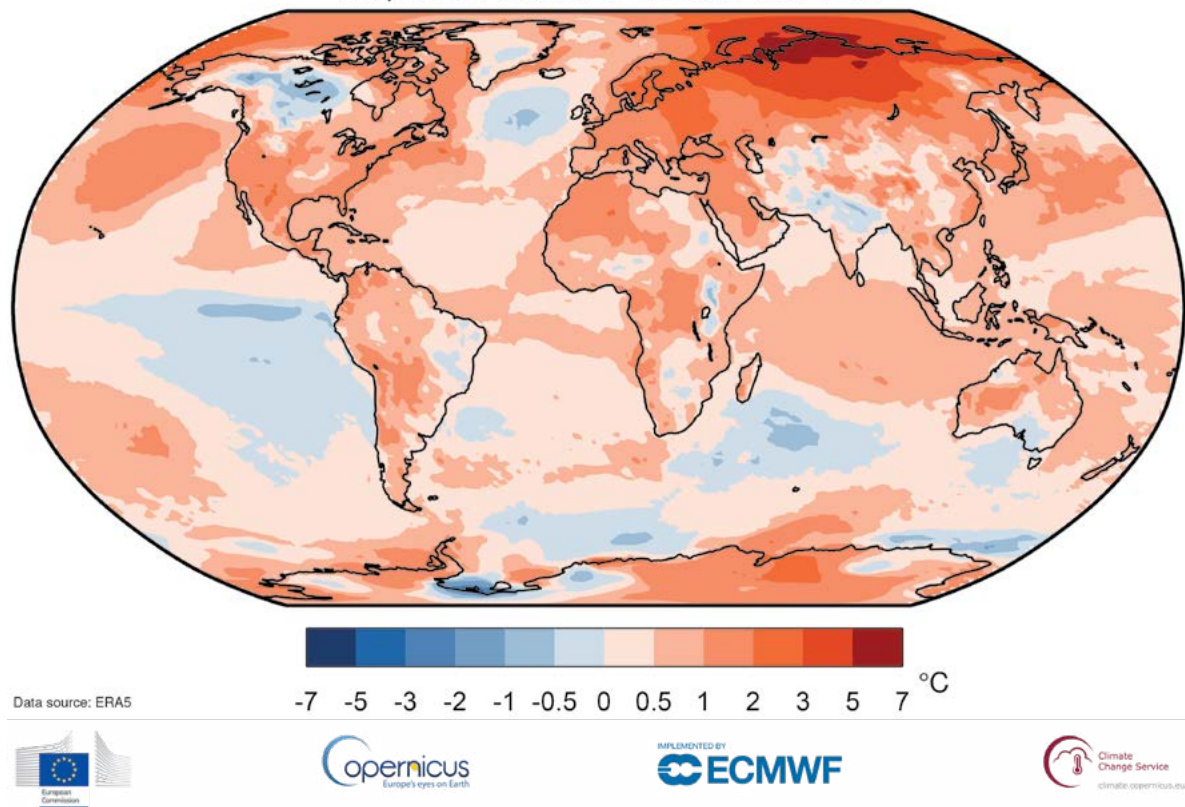
All of the Focus Groves are producing a substantially greater harvest tonnage than the regional average.

It is therefore difficult to understand why other groves chose to do nothing, and accept poor production and high costs. The ability to address these issues is in their hands and there is the unfilled demand for NZ EVOO in many regions.

This is an edited version of the Milestone MS03 report of the Sustainable Farming Fund Project 19025 - Meeting the increasing demand for New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Full details of the project can be found on the Olives New Zealand website: [www.olivesnz.org.nz](http://www.olivesnz.org.nz).



Temperature difference 2020 and 1981-2010



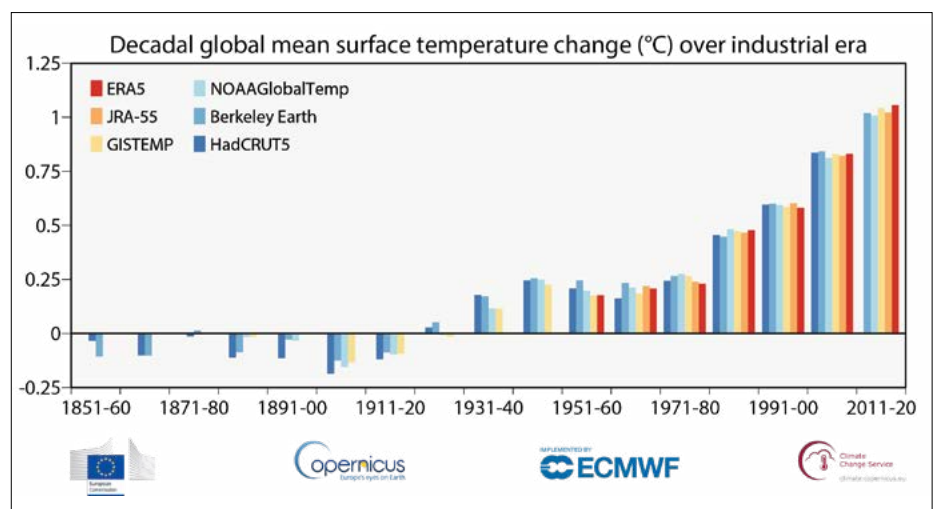
## Copernicus: 2020 warmest year on record for Europe; globally ties with 2016

Latest data released by the European Commission's Copernicus Climate Change Service show that globally, 2020 was on par with the warmest year ever recorded. It ended the warmest decade on record, while data also shows that CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations have continued to rise. Here's a brief synopsis of the data and the weather patterns revealed, providing food for thought and information for grove management planning.

The Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) has released data showing that globally, 2020 tied with the previous warmest year 2016, making it the sixth in a series of exceptionally warm years starting in 2015. It also marks 2011-2020 as the warmest decade recorded.

Europe in particular saw its warmest year on record, 0.4°C warmer than the previous the warmest year, 2019.

Through the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS), C3S also reports that CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the atmosphere have continued to rise at a rate of approximately 2.3ppm/year in 2020, reaching a maximum of 413ppm during May 2020.



Decadal averages of global air temperature at a height of two metres estimated change since the pre-industrial period according to different datasets: ERA5 (ECMWF Copernicus Climate Change Service, C3S); GISTEMPv4 (NASA); HadCRUT5 (Met Office Hadley Centre); NOAAGlobalTempv5 (NOAA); JRA-55 (JMA); and Berkeley Earth. Credit: Copernicus Climate Change Service/ECMWF

## Arctic/Northern Siberia

Parts of the Arctic and northern Siberia saw some of the largest annual temperature deviations from average in 2020, in some locations over 6°C for the year as a whole. On a monthly basis, the largest positive temperature anomalies for the region repeatedly reached more than 8°C.

The wildfire season was unusually active in this region, with fires first detected in May, continuing throughout summer and well into autumn. As a result, poleward of the Arctic Circle, fires released a record amount of 244 megatonnes of carbon dioxide in 2020, over a third more than the 2019 record. During the second half of the year, Arctic sea ice was significantly lower than average, with July and October seeing the lowest sea ice extent on record for the respective month.

## Northern Hemisphere

In general, the Northern Hemisphere experienced above average temperatures for the year, apart from a region over the central North Atlantic. 2020 was Europe's warmest year on record, and winter 2019/20 and autumn 2020 were also the warmest recorded. Winter 2020 (Dec 2019-Feb 2020) exceeded the previous warmest in 2016 by almost 1.4°C, while autumn (Sept-Nov 2020) passed the 2006 record by 0.4°C. In addition, western Europe experienced a significant heatwave in late July and early August. The next four warmest years for Europe also happened during the last decade.

## Southern Hemisphere

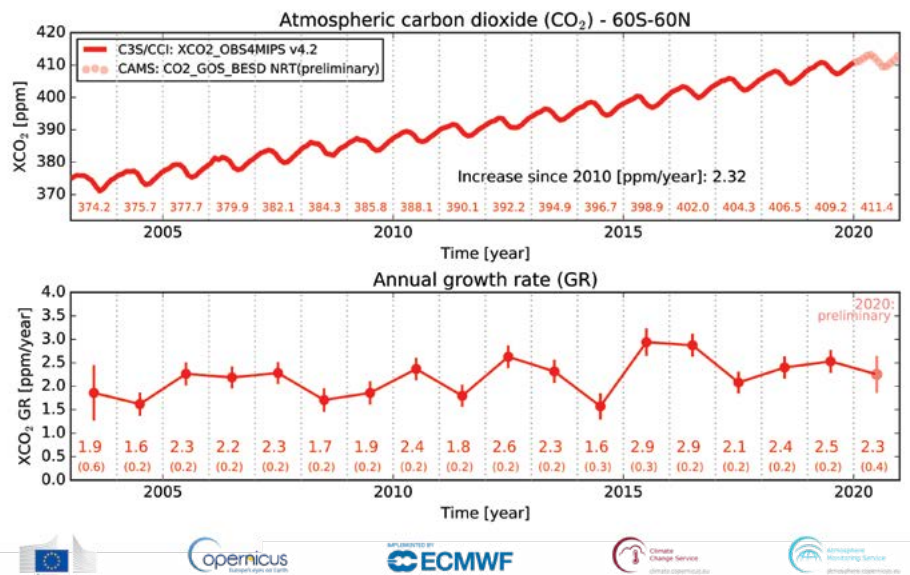
In contrast, parts of the Southern Hemisphere saw below average temperatures in 2020, most notably over the eastern equatorial Pacific. This was associated with the cooler La Niña conditions developing during the second half of the year.

It is notable, however, that 2020 matches the 2016 record despite a cooling La Niña, whereas 2016 was a record year that began with a strong warming El Niño event.

Satellite data reveals that carbon dioxide concentrations have continued to rise in 2020, reaching an unprecedented global column-averaged maximum of 413.1ppm.

The estimated annual mean XCO<sub>2</sub> growth rate for 2020 was 2.3 ± 0.4 ppm/year. This is less than the growth rate in 2019, which was 2.5 ± 0.2 ppm/year and also less than the 2.9 ppm/year increase in 2015 and 2016. However, 2015 and 2016 experienced a strong El Niño climate event, which resulted in a larger atmospheric growth rate due to a weaker than normal uptake of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> by land vegetation and also large CO<sub>2</sub> wildfire emissions from Indonesia in particular.

The report states that the wildfires in the Arctic and Australia in 2020, although of



Monthly global CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations from satellites (top panel) and derived annual mean growth rates (bottom panel) for 2003-2020. Top: column-averaged CO<sub>2</sub> (XCO<sub>2</sub>) based on the C3S/Obs4MIPs (v4.2) consolidated (2003-2019) and CAMS preliminary near-real time data (2020) records. The listed numerical values in red indicate annual XCO<sub>2</sub> averages. Bottom: Annual mean XCO<sub>2</sub> growth rates derived from data shown in the top panel. The listed numerical values correspond to the growth rate in ppm/year including an uncertainty estimate in brackets. Source: University of Bremen for Copernicus Climate Change Service and Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service/ECMWF.

### Copernicus temperature and CO<sub>2</sub> data fast facts:

- Globally, 2020 was on par with 2016 as the warmest year on record.
- 2020 was 0.6°C warmer than the standard 1981-2010 reference period and around 1.25°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial period.
- The last six years have been the warmest six on record.
- Europe saw its warmest year on record in 2020, at 1.6°C above the 1981-2010 reference period and 0.4°C above 2019, the previous warmest year.
- The largest annual temperature deviation from the 1981-2010 average was concentrated over the Arctic and northern Siberia, reaching over 6°C above average.
- CO<sub>2</sub> global column-averaged maximum reached 413ppm.
- CO<sub>2</sub> continued to rise in 2020, increasing by 2.3 ± 0.4ppm, slightly less than the growth rate of the previous year.

unprecedented magnitude in their regions, represent only a small fraction of global fire emissions.

### The pandemic effect

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Carbon Project estimates

a reduction of around 7% of fossil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

"To what extent this was a factor in the lower total increase is debatable though, as the variations in global growth rate are dominated by natural processes," Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service Director Vincent-Henri Peuch said.

"While carbon dioxide concentrations have risen slightly less in 2020 than in 2019, this is no cause for complacency. Until the net global emissions reduce to zero, CO<sub>2</sub> will continue to accumulate in the atmosphere and drive further climate change.

"We must continue efforts to decrease CO<sub>2</sub> net emissions to reduce that risk."

### About Copernicus

Copernicus is the European Union's flagship Earth observation program. It delivers freely accessible operational data and services, providing users with reliable and up-to-date information related to the planet and its environment. The program is co-ordinated and managed by the European Commission and implemented in partnership with the Member States, the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT), the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), EU Agencies and Mercator Océan, among others.

More information: [www.climate.copernicus.eu](http://www.climate.copernicus.eu); [www.icos-cp.eu/gcp-covid19](http://www.icos-cp.eu/gcp-covid19).



# Q&A: Why don't my Nevadillo fruit?

Grower Mary Rose is puzzled about the performance of one of the varieties in her grove, so she sent a question for our expert Q&A 'helpline'. It's an issue other growers have no doubt also faced and the answer is surprising...

Mary Rose,  
Hindmarsh Island, SA

**Q. I have a number of what I was told are Nevadillo trees. They are healthy and have a reasonable number of flowers but no olives.**

**I think the problem may be that they finish flowering before my Frantoio or Koroneiki start, which means they can't be pollinated. I have read that they are not self-fertile.**

**My questions are: what other varieties flower early and do other people have this problem?**

A. Leandro Ravetti and Andrew Burgess, Boundary Bend:

The Modern Olives technical team have in the past undertaken research into the variety Nevadillo Blanco due to its consistent poor crop performance in many groves around Australia.

The issue with Nevadillo Blanco is that it has a disproportionate amount of imperfect flowers (flowers without ovaries that cannot set fruit). While in most varieties this percentage of male-only flowers never exceeds 20%, and leads to normal fruit set levels between 2% and 5%, with Nevadillo the imperfect flowers can reach as much as 90%. This affects the variety's ability to achieve those normal levels of fruit set, which generally end up under 1%.

Consequently, Nevadillo has great flowerings but very poor crops.

A. Mike Thomsett:

Yes, this is a common problem with Nevadillo in particular.

I have 20 Nevadillo trees myself, which were transplanted at 10 years old from another grove. The grower had just one decent crop and a few not-worth-harvesting amounts in that time and decided the ground was more valuable for another variety.

I've had them for 10 years now and have only had enough to harvest once. The oil was very peppery, very bitter and almost so pungent that it wasn't consumable. But 12 months later, after it had mellowed, it was a really nice oil.

The issue is around the high percentage of imperfect flowers, and in some circumstances they may not have adequate pollination for the few perfect flowers that are there. They need a pollinator fairly close.

So I'm treating mine as ornamentals, however I think it's a perfect candidate for re-working with grafts. Either way, I wouldn't recommend Nevadillo for commercial purposes.

It's interesting, though, that Nevadillo trees are still being sold. Also that in the early days of the olive industry, when the (SA) NOVA grove project was being undertaken, there were reports of poor fruit set on Nevadillo. Unfortunately, it didn't stand out and was never recorded as a dud.

## Ask the questions

One of the important lessons from this is to source your tree stock from a specialist nursery experienced in olive varieties, and ask their advice when choosing which you'll plant. They'll know the growth and cropping nuances of each, and will work with you to ensure the most suitable for your grove's soils and climatic conditions.

## Thanks to our experts

We're incredibly lucky to have such generous industry experts who give their time to help us out with answers to our reader questions – in this edition Leandro Ravetti and Andrew Burgess from Boundary Bend/Modern Olives Nursery, and grove consultant (and AOA President) Mike Thomsett.

Thanks, Guys!

If you're buying new trees and need help with choosing varieties, or need professional assistance with other grove issues, go straight to the experts: Modern Olives Nursery - [nursery@mo.emporiumdigital.com.au](mailto:nursery@mo.emporiumdigital.com.au); Mike Thomsett - [thomsett.mail@gmail.com](mailto:thomsett.mail@gmail.com).

## Got an issue in your grove? A tricky question about processing, packaging, or some other aspect of your olive business?

The Olivegrower & Processor team is here to help - and we've got all the right connections.

Let us know what you're pondering over, battling with or downright bamboozled by, and we'll speak with industry experts to try and find the answers. Then we'll share them with you and your fellow Olivegrower readers in coming editions – because if it's got you stumped, no doubt there's a bunch of others out there wondering about the same thing!

Email your queries to Editor Gerri Nelligan at [editor@olivegrower.com.au](mailto:editor@olivegrower.com.au) and we'll be in touch to get it sorted.



In this context the use of fresh garlic (as a soil grown crop) to flavour table olives in brine is NOT a food safety risk, providing the packaging brine is stabilised at maximum pH of 4.3 and minimum Sodium Chloride of 6.0%.

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\*Natural green olives are usually fermented in an anaerobic brine environment, where the existence of an active yeast/lactobacillus fermentation is critical to lowering brine pH and preventing development of spoilage organisms.

Note: state regulatory agencies are inconsistent in their treatment/risk classification of table olive producers, with NSW, Victoria and TAS authorities regarding table olive products as a higher food safety risk than olive oil or flavoured olive oil products. Ensure you are aware of and complying with your state's regulations.

#### Q. What about flavouring olive oil products

A. The addition of fresh fruit vegetable material can be a food safety problem in flavoured olive oil products, given the added moisture from using fresh produce enables formation of an oil/water emulsion that can support anaerobic microbial growth.

The use of dehydrated flavouring material or flavour essences means there is no water to create the problematic emulsion in the flavoured oil product. However, in the table olive production workshops Linda Costa cautioned against adding fresh or dried herbs and spices to finished table olive product because of food safety risks. Dried herbs and spices can pose a risk if they are not sterile, as borne out in the monthly Commonwealth failing foods reports, which regularly include detections of Salmonella and other issues.

For this reason, and to err on the side of caution, dehydrated flavour materials could/should be irradiated before use for either table olive or flavoured olive oil preparations.

Note: Anaerobic microbial growth is also a potential issue in olive oils that have not been adequately racked and purged

to remove water and sediments. This will also likely result in formation of the muddy sediment flavour defect (baby vomit, salami aroma), caused by oil storage in contact with sediment for long periods of time.

#### Approved olive oil flavouring methods

For food safety reasons, flavoured olive oils must not contain emulsions (mixtures of olive oil and other substances not soluble in oil (e.g. water, vinegar)), and should not be made with fresh flavouring agents containing water (e.g. fresh garlic, lemon peel, peppers, herbs). Particular care needs to be taken to reduce water content and achieve safe pH levels in flavoured oils.

Ref: *Food Safety Requirements for Table Olives and Infused Olive Oil*, Jim Smyth (Olives SA 2007) pp 6-8; producers of flavoured olive oils should consult with a qualified food technologist.

(a) Flavoured (infused) olive oils (using distilled essences/essential oils)

It is recommended that ONLY Australian extra virgin olive oil or Australian virgin olive oil be used as the base oil in the production of flavoured (infused) oils; and ONLY use flavouring agents that meet the requirements of the FSANZ - Food Standards Code.

Under OliveCare® guidelines a producer of infused flavoured olive oil may use up to 1% imported content and remain eligible to use the Certified Australian Flavoured Olive Oil logo.

Note: Under Country of Origin (CoOL) regulations, the use of imported flavour essences must be reflected in the content declaration.

(b) Agrumato style/co-processed olive oils  
Agrumato method olive oils are traditionally made from crushing citrus fruits with ripe olives, which produces a naturally lower pH product. Co-processed olive oils

are also made from olives crushed with fresh herbs, fruits, spices or other plants.

Note: Agrumato flavoured olive oils using fresh fruit and vegetables as flavouring agents are safe because the product is racked and purged and will therefore have a low moisture content (as does EVOO) which is NOT a conducive environment for microbial spoilage organisms including *Clostridium botulinum*. In contrast, if lumps of fresh garlic are added to flavour olive oil, this creates an aqueous/ emulsion micro-environment in which *Clostridium botulinum* can develop, releasing its deadly toxins.

#### Non-approved flavouring methods and food safety

For product quality and food safety reasons the following products are not approved under the Olivecare® Code of Best Practice:

(c) Hot infused olive oils

Herbs, fruits or spices are added to olive oil which is heated to achieve flavours, then strained to remove residual vegetable matter. The heating process degrades the oil, rendering it less than extra virgin quality.

(d) Display infused olive oils

Fresh or dried herbs, spices or fruits are added to an olive oil, leaving behind residual matter.

For further information on table olive food safety see Dr Stan Kallis' presentation *Food Safety for Table Olives on the OliveBiz website: www.olivebiz.com.au – Events – 2018 Conference Presentations – Day 2*.

Olivecare® signatories can also access a wealth of resources in the Olivecare® Members Area of the AOA website – [www.australianolives.com.au](http://www.australianolives.com.au).



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False or negative posts are hard to take but the best response is cool, calm and authentic, using positivity to deflate the trolls.

Image: Jeshoots.com on Unsplash.

## Dealing with online trolls

*For most small businesses social media is now an important part of sales and marketing, connecting you with existing and new customers and extending your market reach - particularly during the pandemic. But what happens if someone trolls you and/or your business? The result could be devastating ... but doesn't have to be. Olivegrower spoke with social media expert Lauren Hamilton of Digital Narrative about how to handle the situation – what to do, and what not to do, for the best possible outcome.*

### This really happened

In January a new Byron Bay restaurant got off to an unfortunate start, with a highly negative review posted online about its opening night. Citing unprofessional and disorganised staff, the reviewer described their experience as “an expensive disappointment” and the opening as “a reflection of the way in which a poorly constructed business should run”.

The thing was, the restaurant hadn't actually opened yet.

The owner was naturally upset by the obviously fake review and postponed the planned ‘real’ opening of the restaurant. In the next few days, however, three more negative reviews were added. ABC reporters checked the ‘reviewers’ details and found that none had online profiles or had previously posted any reviews. They said this “implies they are either robots or people using aliases who are trying to sabotage (the) business.”

### It could happen to you

While this sounds like a bizarre occurrence, the reality is that social media is rife with trolls and this sort of thing happens regularly. And if you're a small business owner with an online presence, it could happen to you.

It could be devastating, knocking you around emotionally and/or hurting your business. Or you could de-fuse the situation and even use it to your advantage.

Digital Narrative principal Lauren Hamilton said it all depends on how you deal with it.

### Act quickly

“It's an issue I talk to clients about quite a lot and I've found that - while it may sound strange - it's always best handled in a really positive way,” she said.

“The first thing is to act quickly. Either immediately respond to the person privately – you have the option with social media to

message them directly – or post something like “I'm really sorry you had such a negative experience and would love the opportunity to speak with you offline”, providing a generic email to make further contact.

“If it's not a legitimate post that will generally put an end to it, as they've got nothing to contact you about and will look even more like an idiot if they continue.

### Authentic not defensive

“Most commonly, though, it'll be a negative post about the business or your products, and the golden rule there is to never, ever be defensive.

“With a boutique food product, for example, always acknowledge that the product is handmade so there is a variability of outcomes; batches may look and be slightly different. Acknowledge where there could have been a fault or an error – even if you don't believe there has been – then speak



in an authentic way about the pride you take in your product/business and how you want to improve their experience into the future.

"Other common complaints are about staff – that they're rude or careless. Acknowledge that some are young and may need training, if that's the case, and that you've taken the feedback on board and will work to improve their service.

"But no matter what you believe is the truth, never say 'We've never had complaints before, you're talking rubbish'. It always backfires.

"Generally, it becomes more of an issue if you fight than if you say 'We're not perfect, we're a small business, we're doing the best we can. I'm not really sure how that happened, but we believe you and we're really sorry.'

"A genuine explanation always diffuses it better than getting your back up and being defensive.

"The absolutely key thing is to own the issue that's been raised. Thank them for bringing it to your attention, apologise if necessary and offer to make it right. Nobody expects perfection – or shouldn't – and if you're human and authentic in your response it shows your positive brand values."

***"Take it as an opportunity to show your good, strong brand values."***

***"Accentuate the positive ..."***

Lauren said the best way to deal with negative reviews is to drown them out with positive reviews.

"But not from your Mum and sisters. You've got to be comfortable asking repeat loyal customers for reviews – in fact, that should be part of your ongoing social media strategy," she said.

"You can set up an automatic rating request, or know your top clients and ask them to give you a good review. Be pro-active about feedback generally but especially if you get a bad post; you want to push it down with as many positive ones as you can get."

#### **The true troll**

Lauren said the rules change a little, however, when someone posts an extremely detrimental and untrue comment about your business.

"For example, say someone posted that they'd been to your lovely clean farm shop and 'I saw cockroaches climbing on the food; the place was filthy'. That's not an opinion, that's a lie which could do serious damage to your business.

"In that case, reply and state confidently 'We have very stringent controls and absolutely refute we would ever have pests climbing on our food. We wouldn't be in business if that was the case, and would appreciate you not posting untruths'.

"Occasionally they'll keep at it, and that's when you should just leave it and try to bury it in positive reviews. Some are only there to stir up trouble and doing anything more just exacerbates things.

"But if you have a blatantly untrue, racist, sexist or below the belt comment posted, you do have the right to flag that and remove it from social media, and also to flag it as inappropriate on Google. They review it and if they deem it is inappropriate, they take it down.

***"Overwhelmingly, people are neutralised with a friendly and considerate response."***

"You can also contact Google support by phone or email if you have a serious problem, particularly if you've tried to deal with it reasonably and it escalates. There is always the odd pest out there that you just can't do anything about, so if it's completely unjust and has no bearing on reality then apply by those channels to have it removed.

"That said, it can't just be that they didn't like you or your products, it must be unjust or negative for them to take action."

#### **Respond – always**

And whether you think there's merit in the comment or not, Lauren says it's important to always respond.

"No response is really bad. If you don't get any response to your complaint or disappointment, it cements in your mind that you'll never use that product or service again," she said.

"But if you do and they own it, you think 'Yeah, you care, I'll give you another go.' It's amazing how far a friendly response can go."

#### **Deflate, don't debate**

So if you're doing business online, Lauren said, you need to monitor your social media and feedback pages regularly and be prepared for negative comments.

"They do happen, so don't get too het up about it or you'll come out looking worse," she said.

***"Occasionally they'll keep at it; that's when you should just try and bury it in positive reviews."***

"Take it as an opportunity to show your good, strong brand values, own it and do what you can to reverse the negativity.

"People are willing to support a business if they take responsibility for their people and products, and most of the time you'll deflate the trolls."

*\*Footnote: the really good news is that the attack backfired on the troll, gaining the restaurant owner a supportive following for her venue even before it opened.*



**Lauren Hamilton**

Lauren Hamilton is the principal of Digital Narrative, a small business specialist agency dealing with social media management, influencer marketing, graphic design and website development. Lauren wowed olive growers with her 2019 AOA National Olive Conference Presentation on Digital Marketing for Small Business and set many on the road to success with her hands-on Facebook, Instagram and SEO Workshop.

More information: [www.digitalnarrative.com.au](http://www.digitalnarrative.com.au); [lauren@digitalnarrative.com.au](mailto:lauren@digitalnarrative.com.au) or +61 466 905 004.

**Friday Olive Extracts**

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# Evaluation of current Country of Origin Labelling regulations for food

Peter McFarlane, AOA OliveCare® Administrator

The Federal Government has commissioned an evaluation of current Country of Origin Labelling (CoOL) regulations for food, which came into full-effect in July 2018, to examine how well CoOL reforms for food have:

- improved consumer access to information about the origin of food
- clarified the origin claims businesses can make about their products
- avoided imposing excessive costs on impacted businesses.

Based on observations and experience over the past three years, the AOA has identified and submitted a number of key CoOL issues to the review on behalf of the industry, including:

## Compliance with CoOL regulations

Noting that Country of Origin Labelling Regulations have applied to most Australian food products since 1 July 2016, and became mandatory on 1 July 2018, the Australian Olive Association (AOA) has strongly promoted compliance with CoOL Regulations since its introduction.

## AOA market surveys

The AOA undertakes annual market surveys of olive oil products labelled as Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) across the Australian retail and food service sectors. The market survey program aims to support quality, authenticity and consumer confidence in the Australian olive industry and its products.

Any observed CoOL or other labelling deficiencies are followed up individually with brand owners.

Pleasingly there is now a very high level of compliance with CoOL regulations for olive products, as can be seen from the following data:

For the 2020 market survey a total of 52 samples, comprising 27 Australian and 25 imported olive oils, labelled as EVOO were included. All 52 samples from the 2020 market survey used the required CoOL logo format on their labels.

This compares with the 2018 market survey, which included a total of 43 product samples, comprising 25 Australian and 18 imported, labelled as EVOO. Six (24%) Australian EVOO product labels were found NOT to be compliant with the required CoOL logo format.

## A supermarket exemplar

An August 2020 survey of all olive products sold at a single South Australian Foodland supermarket revealed excellent compliance of both Australian and imported olive products with CoOL regulations. Only one (3%) of 35 olive products displayed in this supermarket was incorrectly labelled:

- of 16 Australia EVOO brands, seven displayed the *Grown in Australia* label, five the *Product of Australia* label and four the *Made in Australia* label. Only one was incorrectly labelled, with a *Made in Australia* statement without the kangaroo logo and content scale bar;
- the five imported EVOO brands were all correctly labelled with their country of origin, three as *Product of Spain* and two *Packed in Italy from imported ingredients*;
- the four Australian flavoured olive oil brands were also all correctly labelled, two displaying *Grown in Australia* labels and two *Made in Australia* (allowing for the imported flavouring).
- there was one imported flavoured olive oil brand, which was correctly labelled as *Produced and Packed in Spain*;
- the five Australian table olive brands were all correctly labelled, one as *Product of Australia*, one *Made in Australia from Australian*

*ingredients*, two as *Made in Australia from Australian and imported ingredients*, and one as *Packed in Australia from imported ingredients*;

- similarly, the four imported table olive brands were all correctly labelled as either *Product of Spain* or *Product of Greece*.



## There shouldn't be any CoOL exemptions

The AOA is concerned that some food products are exempted from the CoOL requirements and has submitted that ALL food products should be covered by CoOL Regulations.

The exemption of 'food service' is a major issue for product integrity, given the competitive pressure in hotels and restaurants to lower ingredient costs. This means the quality of the ingredients used in food service is frequently lower than products available to consumers through supermarkets and other retail outlets.

Olive oil is less likely to be of extra virgin (EVOO) quality, rather it is more likely to be of virgin (VOO) or even Lampante quality, the latter actually not fit for human consumption.

This means that consumers paying for restaurant and hotel food think they are getting top quality ingredients that they may not actually be receiving.

## CoOL lacks transparency

Olive oil products found on Australian supermarket shelves sourced from Italy frequently carry the statement "*Packed in Italy from multiple origins*" or "*Packed in Italy from imported ingredients*".

This is not helpful for consumers, especially when the product label design is distinctly 'Italian'. In truth, these products are likely to comprise a blend of Spanish and North African (Tunisian and Moroccan) olive oil.

## Why is it so difficult to make a transparent declaration of product origin?

The AOA submits that there should be a CoOL requirement to specify all of the countries of origin across all ingredients.

## Integrity or ingredient flexibility?

Related to the above, some producers claim that supply chain issues require some flexibility in CoOL requirements.

The AOA submits that supply issues are not a valid excuse for compromising consumer focus through dilution of 'truth in labelling'.

For example, olive production in Australia tends to be biennial, with production increasing by as much as 100% in 'on-years' and halving in 'off-years'. Producers currently cope with this situation through the carry-over of excess product from 'on-years' to compensate for low production in 'off-years', aided by the fact that well-made olive oil has a potential shelf life of at least two years.

And noting that the Australian EVOO market share is around 50%, with the difference being imported mostly from Spain, Italy (usually blended Mediterranean sources) and Greece, in 'off-years' the proportion of imported oil may also increase.

Note: a significant issue for smaller Australian olive oil producers is regional provenance claims, when there is a local crop failure due





## Information and assistance

The step-by-step Country of Origin Labelling (CoOL) online tool will generate labels tailored specifically for each of your products, ensuring you are complying correctly with the regulations. You'll find it at [www.business.gov.au/foodlabels](http://www.business.gov.au/foodlabels).

Subscribers can also reference our comprehensive feature on the new CoOL requirements in the June 2017 edition of *Olivegrower & Processor*, available online for viewing 24/7 at [www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au).

to season conditions. If sourcing product from elsewhere to meet demand, producers may need to suspend the regional provenance claims on their product labels through these periods of short supply. The AOA regularly reminds its members of this legal requirement under Australian Consumer Law.

## Call to extend CoOL logo display requirements

The AOA has also submitted that there should be an additional requirement to include the relevant CoOL logo on any advertising of food products (both print and online).

Currently online sales catalogues rarely depict the CoOL logo, which is not usually 'front of pack'. It would therefore be useful for consumers if use of the CoOL logo was mandatory on websites, adjacent to product descriptions where the consumer places an on-line order.

All products, including fresh, should also have CoOL logos included on the supermarket shelf label.

## The CoOL logos

The Made in Australia logo is potentially misleading where Australian content is low. There needs to be a threshold to use the logo (we suggest 50% Australian ingredients). The Australian logo image should not be used if the Australian content is <50%. Rather the CoOL logo should revert to a style similar to the Packed in Australia logo (see below).



## OliveCare® members practice

OliveCare® has been surveying members on their use of CoOL logos in the prescribed format, with preliminary results as follows:

- 60% use *Product of Australia* (with kangaroo and content 100% bar)
- 15% use *Grown in Australia* (with kangaroo and content 100% bar)
- 25% use *Made in Australia from at least x% Australian ingredients* (with kangaroo and content x% bar)
- None use *Packed in Australia from at least x% Australian ingredients* (no kangaroo, with content x% bar)
- None use other country of origin statement eg *Product of Spain*

What is of particular interest is the reluctance of some OliveCare® members to use the *Made in Australia* logo option because of historical and continuing misuse of the original *Made in Australia* logo, with associated damage to consumer trust.

The changes detailed above would no doubt go far to renew consumer trust in our labelling system, and subsequently increase producer support for the regulations.

*The public consultation period has now closed, with the review expected to be completed in June 2021. If reform of the CoOL regulations is an important issue to you, contact your local Member of Parliament and request they make comment on your behalf.*

*More information on the regulations and the evaluation review are available at [www.industry.gov.au/regulations-and-standards/country-of-origin-food-labels](http://www.industry.gov.au/regulations-and-standards/country-of-origin-food-labels).*



## AOA Labelling Guides

There's more help at hand with labelling issues via the AOA's Labelling Guides for EVOO, Flavoured Olive Oil and Table Olives, all updated in the second half of 2020 to current government regulations and industry labelling requirements. The comprehensive guides lead you step-by-step through creating a label for Australian product sold in Australia, ensuring the end result is compliant with the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*, the *Australian Standard for olive oil and olive pomace oils (AS 5264-2011)*, the *Voluntary Standard for Table Olives In Australia (updated January 2020)*, *Country of Origin Labelling Regulations* and the *FSANZ Food Standards Code*. Covering all mandatory, optional and recommended elements of Australian olive product labels, these 'paint by numbers' guides take the guess-work out of creating compliant labelling.

Members can download the guides from the AOA website – [www.australianolives.com.au](http://www.australianolives.com.au) - via the Members' Lounge.

Label images and information © Commonwealth of Australia - [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au).



## Monitoring hardware now included with FrostBoss® frost fans

Australian Frost Fans is the sister business to New Zealand Frost Fans, which manufactures the FrostBoss® range of frost fans at their factory in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. The FrostBoss® C49 (4-blade machine) is the best-selling frost fan in Australasia.

Web-based monitoring of frost fans is becoming more popular and the FrostBoss® controller has been designed with this in mind. The remote monitoring option, known as FrostSmart™, enables growers to access real-time monitoring of fans around the world, together with text alarms and historical data and graphs on temperature, run-hours and machine performance. The hardware required for FrostSmart™ monitoring is now included as standard with all FrostBoss® machines, which incorporate Auto Start™/Stop and wireless radio temperature probes. That means no additional hardware costs, only an annual monitoring fee for data access.

### Direct end-to-end service

Other benefits which differentiate Australian/New Zealand Frost Fans from other companies include:

- end-to-end service from initial mapping and machine layouts to consent applications (if required) on your behalf, supply and installation, and ongoing service and monitoring;
- a growing network of Service Centres with dedicated and specially equipped service trucks, which provide safe access to top gearboxes and fast, environmentally-safe oil changes;
- physical stock of machines and parts at all Service Centres, enabling shorter lead times for installation and highly responsive after-sales service and support;
- deal directly with the manufacturer – no intermediaries.

Committed to finding the best frost mitigation solution for growers, CEO Steve Haslett says “all we do is frost fans, so we stake our reputation and livelihoods on it.”

### Improved efficiency and reliability

The company's significant research and development program therefore focuses on improving the efficiency and reliability of frost fans, resulting in the development of the FrostBoss® C49 frost fan incorporating the proprietary FrostBoss® clutch, controller and C49 composite blades.

### Climate change brings more frosts

Increased frequency of frosts, along with greater temperature extremes, are a common theme of climate change effects across the globe.

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)'s online Weather and Climate Risk in Agriculture report confirms that, while a warming trend in minimum temperatures in spring has been observed over the past 35 years in many growing regions, if corresponding rainfall is low and there is less soil moisture (which assists in holding heat in the ground) the risk of frost damage may be high. And in these conditions “frost events that do occur have the potential to be more extreme”.

A New Zealand MPI technical paper also concluded that significant regional differences in climate variance across the country means that regions including Marlborough have shown “virtually no warming trend in mean annual temperatures, but instead a trend of increasing daily temperature range and frost occurrence over recent decades.”

The FrostBoss® C49 was developed with help from former Team New Zealand aerodynamics research engineer Richard Karn, to optimize noise reduction by using a greater blade working area and slower rotational speed than a 2-blade fan. In addition, the much higher blade passage frequency of the 4-blade fan means the noise signature no longer has a low frequency beating sound. Along with the FrostBoss® C59 (5-blade machine), the FrostBoss® C49 is the quietest machine on the market.

Marketed through its own companies in New Zealand and Australia, FrostBoss® fans are also installed in Argentina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, France and Turkey through local distributors.

As well as supply and installation of FrostBoss® frost fans, the trans-Tasman companies service and upgrade most makes of frost fan.

More information: [www.aussiefrostfans.com.au](http://www.aussiefrostfans.com.au), [www.nzfrostfans.com](http://www.nzfrostfans.com), [www.loncel.com](http://www.loncel.com) or contact Ian Mason at [ian.mason@aussiefrostfans.com.au](mailto:ian.mason@aussiefrostfans.com.au), mob: 0448 111 384.





## Orana liquid food packaging services: creating opportunities

Orana has specialised in servicing the olive oil industry since 2016 with the introduction of a fill line specifically for edible liquids. Our focus is on providing our clients with continuous and varied opportunities to assist in meeting their growth, and in turn meet the continued increase in demand for finished product. This has positioned Orana well for the future and in 2021 we have expanded our capacity to include the popular bag in box technology.

### Quality certification

We pride ourselves on our offer, which includes dedicated account management and a high level of quality control, HACCP and Organic Certification. The testimonials we receive reflect our reputation in the industry as do our repeat customers, many of whom are iconic growers and producers based in South Australia with global distribution.

Based in Netley, 6.2km west of Adelaide, our convenient location assures our customers of convenience, timeliness and cost efficiencies with transportation.

### Supporting social inclusion

Importantly, by partnering with Orana, you will be contributing to building a socially inclusive community by supporting people with disability to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Orana's employees take pride in providing our customers with quality products and exceptional service. At Orana our mission is to create responsive and sustainable partnerships that empower our employees within their community.

### Satisfied customers

Here's a testimony from one of our long term customers, Pendleton Estate Ltd:

"Since mid-2016 we have been utilising Orana's services for a large percentage of our retail bottling of edible oils and vinegar range.

"Whilst Orana offer industry competitive pricing we have been most impressed with the great attention to food safety, ability to bottle a variety of packaging sizes and to accommodate us with both large and small bottling runs. Orana is HACCP Certified

with strong OH&S standards, cross checking procedures and friendly staff.

"Being based in Netley within the Adelaide metro area has aided our business with cost efficiencies in logistics, which includes accommodating delivery and packing of 20ft export shipping containers ready to deliver to the wharf."

Clint Wylie, Senior Manager Operations

### Learn more

I welcome your enquiry and encourage you to reach out to me for a guided tour of our facility.

Watching the pride in our employees as they work together to achieve excellent and consistent outcomes for our customers is a pleasure I never tire of, and one I love to share with new customers.

Please contact me to find out how we can help your business.

Carolyn Rayner Manager, Business Development, Orana – phone 08 8375 2000 or email [crayner@orana.asn.au](mailto:crayner@orana.asn.au).

More information: [www.oranaonline.com.au](http://www.oranaonline.com.au)

2021

Mar

21 March  
Healthy Soils Field Day - Rushworth, VIC  
[www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au)

25 March  
AOA Processing Webinar - Technical  
Aspects of Olive Oil Extraction  
[www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au)

28 March  
AOA Healthy Soils Field Day - Lowden (via  
Donnybrook), WA  
[www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au)

30 March  
AOA Healthy Soils Field Day - Ginginup,  
WA  
[www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au)

Apr

5 April  
Entries close, Berlin Global Olive Oil  
Awards - Berlin, Germany  
[www.berlingooa.com](http://www.berlingooa.com)

9 April  
Olives NZ Focus Grove Field Day - Hawke's  
Bay  
[www.olivesnz.org.nz](http://www.olivesnz.org.nz)

12 April  
Olives NZ Focus Grove Field Day -  
Northland  
[www.olivesnz.org.nz](http://www.olivesnz.org.nz)

14 April  
Olives NZ Focus Grove Field Day -  
Canterbury  
[www.olivesnz.org.nz](http://www.olivesnz.org.nz)

15 April  
Olives NZ Focus Grove Field Day - Nelson  
[www.olivesnz.org.nz](http://www.olivesnz.org.nz)

16 April  
Olives NZ Focus Grove Field Day -  
Wairarapa  
[www.olivesnz.org.nz](http://www.olivesnz.org.nz)

May

7 May  
Entries close, OLIVE JAPAN 2021  
International Olive Oil Competition  
[www.olivejapan.com/en](http://www.olivejapan.com/en)

15 May  
Entries close, EVO IOOC 2021 - Palmi, Italy  
[www.evo-iooc.it](http://www.evo-iooc.it)

18-19 May  
Farm2Plate Exchange 2021 - Scenic Rim,  
Qld  
[www.regionality.com.au](http://www.regionality.com.au)

25 May  
Winners announced, OLIVE JAPAN 2021  
International Olive Oil Competition  
[www.olivejapan.com/en](http://www.olivejapan.com/en)

7-9 June  
Hort Connections 2021 - Brisbane, Qld  
[www.hortconnections.com.au](http://www.hortconnections.com.au)

Jun

Aug

2 August  
Entries open, 2021 Hunter Olive Show -  
Hunter Valley, NSW  
[www.hunterolives.asn.au](http://www.hunterolives.asn.au)

Sep

September - Dates TBC  
2021 Sydney Royal Oil & Olives Competition  
- Sydney, NSW  
[www.rasnsnsw.com.au](http://www.rasnsnsw.com.au)

3 September  
Entries close, 2021 Hunter Olive Show -  
Hunter Valley, NSW  
[www.hunterolives.asn.au](http://www.hunterolives.asn.au)

Oct

7 October  
Awards Presentation, 2021 Hunter Olive  
Show - Hunter Valley, NSW  
[www.hunterolives.asn.au](http://www.hunterolives.asn.au)

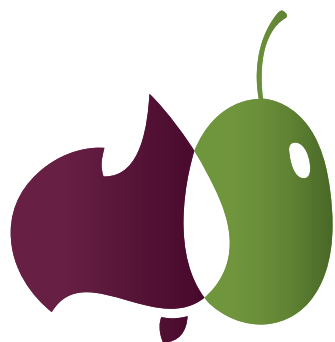
15-17 October  
2021 National Olive Conference & Trade  
Exhibition - Devonport, Tasmania  
[www.nationaloliveconference.com.au](http://www.nationaloliveconference.com.au)

16 October  
2021 Australian International Olive Awards  
Presentation - Devonport, Tasmania  
[www.internationaloliveawardsaustralia.com.au](http://www.internationaloliveawardsaustralia.com.au)

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OG & P Subscription x4.....	\$4
Olivebiz Classifieds x1.....	\$60
Annual membership 5 ha grower =	\$225
* Plus ongoing event discounts	
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- ✓ Code of Practice OliveCare



- ✓ Consumer Awareness & Education Campaigns – *Everyday, Fresher Tastes Better!*
- ✓ Biosecurity management

- ✓ Australian International Olive Awards



- ✓ AOA National Industry Conference & Exhibition
- ✓ Point of sale marketing merchandise
- ✓ PHA Biosecurity Levy

- ✓ Market surveillance and reporting

- ✓ Grower field days and seminars

- ✓ Industry communications – *Olivegrower & Processor, Friday Olive Extracts, Olivebiz*

Friday Olive Extracts

**Olivegrower & processor**  
NATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE OLIVE INDUSTRY

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- ✓ Tastebook program



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- ✓ Geographical Indication representation

- ✓ Codex representation

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The Australian Olive Association is the prescribed industry body representing all olive growers, certified importers and service providers in Australia since 1995.

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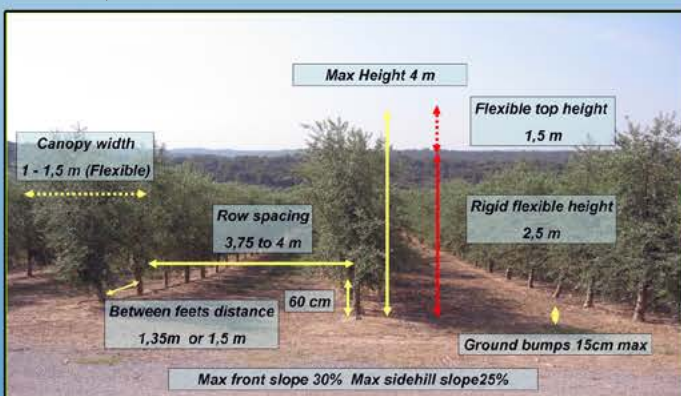
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