



NEWSLETTER Issue 81 May 2018

Note from the Editor:

As you will be aware a new committee was elected at the last AGM and suddenly my inbox is full of emails! Balancing tending to those, and picking over 2 tonne of olives by hand over the last month has been a challenge, as has picking for all of you, no doubt. Fortunately for me I'm happy to be sitting here putting the newsletter together, as I am slightly over working in the grove.

The real thing that is exercising our minds is whether it is actually worth going to all the trouble of having a product to sell. Don't get me wrong, the trees were loaded, we had some fun with friends and family, the weather was kind and the oil is delicious. It is also satisfying to make good use of the property but as a commercially viable exercise it is becoming more and more of an exercise in futility.

Unfortunately I am unable to give a definitive cost of certification of the processing your oil, bottling it and selling it. What I do know is that \$500 seems to be a magic number councils use to round off any annual costs. It can be called anything from registration to retail licence! For ourselves, in the Kaipara District, the cost of NP1 certification, that is a license to bottle and store and then sell either on-line or at a market, costs around the \$1000 mark, annually. Costs appear to be similar throughout the four.



Districts our members live in: Far North, Whangarei, Kaipara and Auckland. Add that to the cost of processing (60c to \$1.50 per kilo) the bottles, the labels the pickers, etc. you are looking at around 60% of the value of a bottle of oil. If you happen to sell in bulk then it is well and truly the entire cost per litre charged. I haven't accounted for the sunk costs of land, pruning, equipment (picking and storing) fertilising and spraying programmes or indeed the owner's time costs.

So where to from here under the new Food Act regulations. It is always marginal to run a small business, and scale is always the issue whether you are making plastic coat hangers, growing olives or producing milk. Most costs are similar whatever the size of the operation with only marginal increases as quantity increases. Artisan producers will know that you can't just keep putting your prices up as the buyer just stops buying at a certain price point. That on a good day, seems to be around the \$40-\$50 a litre for good new season's fresh oil.

The question then arises should you sell your olives and/or your oil to the press house e.g Olivado, Parkhill or Salumeria and not bother with the issues of compliance yourself. Or are you happy to cover your costs and have some purpose to your life in your retirement and maybe cover the cost of your rates and enjoy the company of your family and friends at least once a year over Autumn. Do these new compliance costs spell the end of the local markets as they are doing in Europe? Should Olivetti start negotiating with councils on behalf of members, and see if we can have them be more realistic than they are now with their charges? Olivetti is in the process of updating its website so we can hopefully start an on-line discussion about your experiences on dealing with council and their compliance costs which have made us reach the tipping point of questioning our viability. Your thoughts are welcome.

Kay McKelvie

Notes from the Chair –

Welcome to old and new members of Oliveti.

I hope those of you who have completed your harvest have enjoyed a great crop and the oils are now safely in the fustis. It has been a bit of a race against the dreaded Anthracnose for some but by careful monitoring most growers up here in the Far North seem to have escaped the worst of it. Yields seem to be in 12 – 15% range which is probably better than some of us thought because of the horrible wet and humid Summer weather in the Far North. For those of you still to pick we hope you enjoy a similar bounty of the fruit of the olive.

Your new committee has settled into their respective jobs and we are starting to make headway. You will find our years plan set out elsewhere in the newsletter.

At the same time we have devoted much time focusing on the things that really matter to our members. Can we help in reducing in-put costs for our growers? Should we look at mini-co-ops in several areas to lower costs? Can we make the Field days more interesting and informative? What is the best way to change the web page from a purely information source to a pro-active route for the key agri-tourism potential customers to buy your oils? Should we look long term to establishing a buying group? Can we build towards a Trade Expo where the members of Oliveti will be able to achieve big savings by buying in October or early November so we can get fixed negotiated prices on bottles, harvesting equipment, grove machinery and storage options for delivery in January or early February?

The one area that is really important to our members is the continued support for our Olive Oil Competition. This would have to be one of the biggest contributors to helping our growers sell their oils and at a very low cost. There was much debate at the AGM regarding the comparative costs of the ONZ and Oliveti Competitions.

One of the arguments for the very high cost of the ONZ Competition is that they bring in 2 overseas judges – well we have been lucky to have our own international judge. The simple fact is that most small to medium growers cannot afford the costs of having their oils in the ONZ competition. You can't afford NOT to enter your own Oliveti Competition to help sell your oils. Diary the date of our competition.

Registering for NP1 (national programme) and or NP3 food plans and all that entails as well as the costs involved. Can these costs be mitigated somehow and by working together utilising a single building and having your oils bottled in that one local area building? Maybe look at having front of building as a retail shop and back of building the processing/storage/bottling/labelling area. If you can harness various artisanal growers and processors to work as a co-op to showcase your areas produce and deli lines then you can dramatically cut costs by forming co-ops. The problem is of course that NZ historically doesn't do Co-ops well at all but maybe now is the time to really re-think that. The one certainty is that time is rapidly running out for registration and certification. PLEASE understand what you need to do and start right now.

For me I just want to see Oliveti retain its importance to all growers in our area – from the micro grower enthusiast, the small to medium growers with the odd large growers. We are, and always have been, an inclusive group that will share information, ideas and most important, ways of trying to make a profit out of the fruit of the Olive. When we have surveyed members in the past we have always found that there is strong demand for the Field day get togethers. We still see those as an essential part of our plan.

Information on what if anything ONZ might offer Oliveti and what they might want from us with a view to amalgamation. Mark's verbal report at our AGM suggested that he now feels we are better retaining our independence but you can read his report for more information. We will start a dialogue with them once both organisations have bedded in with new committees and chairmen.

One thing for sure is that the next few years are going to be full of change and challenges to say the least.

Kind regards John Bishop - Chairman

Tribute to Russell Fransham

It is with sorrow we share that long term supporter of Oliveti Russell Fransham passed away in December. Russell a founding member of Oliveti was always very supportive to our members, coming along to all the field days showing us how to prune, advising us on how and where to plant the trees, and what not to do. Before the internet Russell was our key source of information, support and expertise. We have Russell to thank for the Oliveti logo as well. He was responsible for recruiting the free services of renowned artist Steve Maose to provide us with our own piece of New Zealand art.

Russell's love of horticulture started at a young age, his grandparents and parents were all passionate gardeners. He was well-known for his knowledge of unknown sub-tropicals for our climate and his own garden and nursery have often been described as magical.

Besides all the Olive Growers who Russell helped, the people of Whangarei will miss seeing his small truck passing by usually full of plants. Russell's legacy will continue through the thousands of Northland trees he grew from grafts and cuttings. His partner is carrying on with the business and we wish him all the best for the future.

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Mislaid

The Oliveti banner and urn have been mislaid. The last I saw them was two years ago at Takutu Olives when we had the 2016 AGM. They may have travelled to other field days since then but no-one seems to know where they are. Could you all have a wee look and see if they are in your sheds. The banner in particular is extremely handy to put on the gate of the hosts of field days so others know where to go. It was expensive to make as well. Thanks. If you find either let me know mckelvieky@gmail.com

Growers Profile

Estuary Olives Kaipara

Wayne and Pauline Young

A North facing olive grove overlooking an 'Estuary' on the Kaipara Harbour in Whakapirau gives Wayne and Pauline Young the perfect aspect for their 180 olive trees. It is a steep, sun soaked grove with an interesting varietal mix of table and oil olives. The table olives are called 'Eddy Hope' and 'Villa Maria'. The oil varieties are Leccino, Koroneiki, Chemlali, Mission, and a Mike Riley special called Mahurangi, similar in size to a J5.

The Young Ones bought their property in 2003 and planted their grove in 2004/05. In 2003 they were members of the Tree Croppers Association and gleaned a lot of valuable information from the organisation and its members on what to plant as a fruiting crop. After a visit to Jim and Jane Dawson's grove in Matakana the decision to plant olives was embedded. One of the significant factors was that at that time they did not live at the Grove and they didn't want to be spending all their time tending trees, they have since been disabused of that notion!! The soil was originally tested and the laboratory suggested they plant grapes as the soil was well suited but by then they were committed to olives and they seemed the easiest to tend from afar.



Wayne and Pauline use organic methods and so do not spray their trees or fertilize them apart from an experimental programme of spreading blackstrap diluted molasses. This year their trees were producing anything up to 50 kilos a tree and overall with selective picking they have

harvested 1.476tonne.

Their family and neighbours, form a happy band of pickers on an annual basis and as I write this article they are having their first day off in three

weeks and we are sitting in their newish (2014) home which they now live in full time having retired from the Auckland rat race.

Their table olives are extremely popular with the birds and they are considering netting the few trees they have to ensure they are left to ripen to perfection. The oil varieties tend to be picked early in the season to get ahead of the birds and produce a more complex taste. Wayne explains that "...we forget olive trees are just trees and wherever possible should be allowed to follow their natural tendencies rather than being rigorously pruned to a predetermined profile."



Wayne, originally hails from Pitcairn Island where he lived until he was 10 with his Pitcairn Island sixth generation, Bounty decedent father, and New Zealand born Mother. The terrain of the Kaipara reminds Wayne of the volcanic slopes of the Island. "Living by the sea is important to me as the ocean has always figured significantly in my life" says Wayne and the "rugged West Coast is more enticing to me than the busy shores of the East Coast."

Pauline, our newly elected Secretary, was born and raised in New Zealand from fifth generation New Zealand born parents. As well as being a hard working member of their cultivating and picking team, Pauline has been experimenting with the production of olive oil soap and hand cream along with pickling their table olives.



Pauline says "Olive Oil properties are significant both as an internal food and as an external product for softening and revitalising the skin". She sells out of her olive oil products (pictured) as fast as she can make them. As if that isn't enough of a retirement plan Pauline also runs a therapeutic massage clinic from their original holiday home on the property.



As well as tending their grove and producing olive based products they are both committed members of the Otamatea weed control group. Colloquially known as 'weed whackers.' With a strong conservation philosophy they work to eradicate noxious weeds around the Kaipara to return it to its native flora and fauna. The Northern Regional Council provides some herbicides to assist in the eradication programme. Their own property is showing significant signs of a native regeneration programme on the 3 hectares outside the grove.

Certainly a great team to have has neighbours. Kay McKelvie

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Opinion: The case for affiliation with Olives New Zealand

I think that is difficult to argue with the premise that the interests of growers in the Oliveti region are best served by a national body that speaks for all, and contributing regional groups generating local activities.

The national body would be set up to hear the concerns, ideas and initiatives from the regions and also hold a national awards competition. The body would interact and influence government licencing and trade departments and reassure these offices by disseminating a monitored quality assurance regime to growers. Ideally there would be nationally arranged events and locally organised community events.

Now in New Zealand we have a revived national body, championing inclusivity with members throughout the land but also regional organisations that work completely independently. Members wanting to participate in both need to belong separately to both. I find this bizarre and always have done. Growers seem to have to compare between the two and energies are duplicated, effectiveness diluted.

The shape and distances of our beautiful land make this a challenge to say the least, but I think that the best model must be to have the regional representatives make up the national committee. I also believe that growers should pay one subscription that affords this and that capex funds provided to the regional bodies to carry out local activities.

Now all this is nice in theory, but we have to get around the fact that regional cliques continue to dominate the national executive and also that the current Olives NZ leadership is not open to dispersal payments to the regions. When you add to this that Oliveti has formed a name and identity in the north we find ourselves at the stalemate that has existed since year dot.

Olives NZ is currently doing some excellent things that cannot be ignored and are definitely moving in the right direction. I consider it unwise for Oliveti to compete with Olives NZ as just a regional organisation.

John Bishop, the current chairman of Oliveti is to have discussions with Olives NZ regarding a working arrangement and is to stand our ground to maintain the Oliveti name and I applaud that stance. It was clear at our AGM that many of our members have strong feelings about the worthiness of Oliveti as an organisation and wish for her to stay strong.

I encourage all members to have their say, publically through newsletters or privately to John or other committee members.

Mark Webber

Editors notes added.

Olives New Zealand currently has approximately 200 members. (As reported on their website) Oliveti fluctuates between 70-100. Membership of Oliveti is \$50, ONZ fees range from \$106.25 for less than 100 trees to \$425.00 for 250 or more trees. Both organisations operate a user pay system for competitions with significant variation in pricing.

According to ONZ website they have five active branches. Waiarapa, Nelson, Hawkes Bay, Kapiti and Canterbury.

They do not have active branches in Auckland, Northland, Waiheke, Bay of Plenty, Marlborough or Central Otago although there are likely to be members from all these areas.

There was at one time a Northland branch of Olives New Zealand but that was disbanded (I'm not sure why)

Olives NZ, unlike Oliveti, has a full-time paid Manager and so is in a better position to progress big projects than one is with only voluntary labour. Personally I don't see Oliveti in competition with ONZ but rather as complimentary too. I look forward to further conversations.

Programme of Events for 2018/2019

- 1) **Field day Sunday 28th May** – Far North – Hihi Olives – Colin and Lynette Wilson off SH10 into Hihi Road. Main topic differences in pruning and understanding the way the Europeans do it. A gathering of anyone needing a coffee and/or lunch will be held at The Waterfront Café Mangonui from 11.30am.

Andreas from Far North Enviro Lab will be there so you can drop off your oil for scientific testing on the day. 100ml per oil.

- 2) **Newsletter out by Thursday 12th July.**

All info in to mckelvie kay@gmail.com by Thursday 5th July –

- 3) **Oil Competition Saturday 25th August** – To be held at The Olive Place in Wellsford. This is a closed session.

Chief Judge Margaret Edwards. Further details in the next newsletter. As a heads up Scientifically tested Oils must be with Pauline Young by Wednesday 15th August. Please courier to Pauline Young at 297 Heatley Road Whakapirau RD1 Maungaturoto 0583

- 4) **Field Day Sunday September 30th with Mini Expo & Awards Presentation.**

At Barry Wade's place River Estate Olives in Whitford. Expo to start 9a.m. until 4p.m. Detailed programme to follow.

Attendees to provide their own lunch.

- 5) **Newsletter out by Thursday 22nd November.**

All info in to mckelvie kay@gmail.com by Thursday 15th November –

- 6) **Field day & Xmas BBQ** – let's find the original J5. **Sunday Dec 9th**

- 7) **Newsletter out by Thursday 12th February.**

All info in to mckelvie kay@gmail.com by Thursday 7th February

- 8) **Field Day Sunday 17th February. Venue to be advised.**

- 9) **Sunday March 17th March 2019 AGM Details to be advised of venue and guest speaker.**

ONE OR TWO COUGHS WITH THAT?

Here's a little something you might like to remember. TRPA1.

If you're a lover of EVOO, you'll be enjoying the effects of your TRPA1 receptors, each time you cough, while tasting the world's finest olive oil. You can blame our ancestors for that, scientists believe. The TRPA1 receptors, which form a protein on the surface of the cells in the upper part of your throat, and in your nose. But not in your mouth.

Our predecessors, over millennia, have organised these clever little protein molecules to recognise an anti-inflammatory compound in our beautiful oil. Named "Oleocanthal", this agent reacts by inhibiting potentially dangerous chemicals found in a variety of poisons, and some foods, such as wasabi, or strong mustard. The TRPA1 receptor is also reactive when it encounters citronella, tear gas, and other acrid smoke.

The cough is regarded as a final attempt by our bodies to avoid contaminated air entering our lungs. The goal is to expel the unwanted intrusion, to avoid internal damage.

Although we have many such receptors which protect us from induced danger, it appears that only TRPA1 can detect Oleocanthal. TRPA1 is also sensitive to Ibuprofen, and comparable non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, although there appears to be no chemical link between these and EVOO. However, the effects of Oleocanthal are well documented as being mildly anti-inflammatory – four tablespoons of EVOO having roughly equivalent effect as one tenth of an Ibuprofen tablet. Not that swallowing such a quantity of EVOO is guaranteed to make you feel better!

So enjoy the coughing with each taste of excellent quality olive oil. The more coughs, thanks to the hard work of our TRPA1 receptors, the better it is for you. Perhaps there could be a case for increasing the price of the oil, for each cough experienced by tasters at markets...

John O'Leary



For contracting pressing

Roger Stephenson, Quail Ridge – Cielo Oliveto Ltd

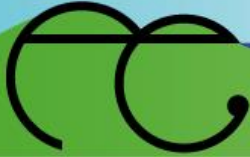
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<p style="font-size: 1.1em; margin: 0;">For olive pressing and fruit purchase contact:</p>	<p style="font-size: 1.1em; margin: 0;">Jason Vokes Logistics</p> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/> <p>Olivado Ltd 41 Sandys Road RD2, Kerikeri 0295 New Zealand tel +64 9 407 3080 fax +64 9 407 3082 mob +64 21 027 10596 jason@olivadoltd.co.nz</p>	 <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">OLIVADO</p> <p style="font-style: italic; font-size: 1.1em; margin: 0;">Taste the goodness</p> <p style="font-size: 0.9em; margin: 0;">www.olivado.com</p>
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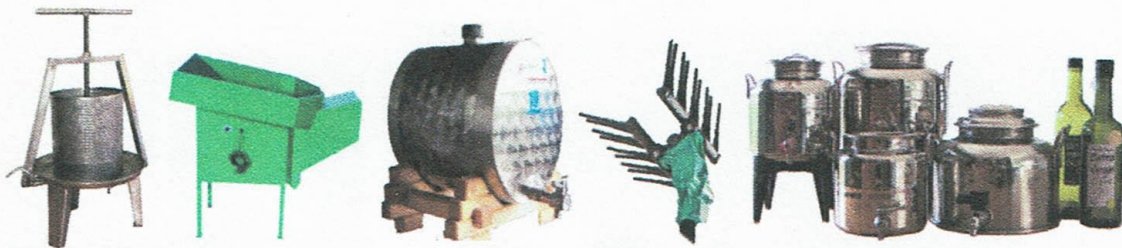


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