

**NEWSLETTER**  
**Issue 102 – June 2023**



Dear Oliveti Members

Welcome to another newsletter.

Harvest is such a special time as we finally see the fruits of the years' work nurturing our trees. Each of us will have our own method of harvesting depending on the size of our grove, and how many volunteers we can muster. It would be great to get some feedback from you all on the many ways we each harvest our crop.

At our grove in Mangawhai for instance – we have about 120 trees, of which probably 80 trees were producing. We just pick for one day and what we get is what we get. We have about 20 volunteers, most of whom come back year after year. We use nets, hand rakes and 2 mechanical harvesters. We start around 9am, lay out the nets and then pick until about 4.30 pm. We tip our nets into a small trailer, blow out the leaves with a leaf blower as best we can, and then transfer the olives in to 2 large shipping bins. We repeat this process until all the olives are picked or we have filled the 2 bins.

For us, the best part of the day is the meal at night with about 20 people - plenty of catching up, lots of chat and wine.

The next day we take the olives off to the press. In our case - to Greg Scopas of Salumeria Fontana just out of Wellsford.

Once you have your oil safely in your fustis - what do you do from there? How long should you keep it before bottling; Should the oil should be filtered after the pressing process; and so on. Then there is the bottling, the labelling and of course – the selling. It is all quite a process.

I am sure everyone has story to tell about the successes and/or failures of their particular olive harvests and one of the unique pleasures of attending Oliveti Field Days, is the opportunity they provide to share and to discuss our harvests; pressing; bottling; pruning; fertilising; in fact all aspects of olive cultivation in NZ.

A big thankyou to John & Anne Russell for hosting our most recent Field Day at their Tara Iti Grove at Tern Point in Mangawhai.

John & Anne provided an interesting insight into their grove and the many varieties of olive trees they grow as well as a brief history of the Tern Point development and a very informative talk about their own olive press. This was followed with an interesting group discussion on some of the issues we all face as olive growers.

We are tentatively planning to have the next Field Day in August at Salumeria Fontana, Hoteo North where it will be hosted by Greg Scopas and Kath Katavich. There is very little Greg has not experienced when it comes to olive growing and we will also be able to view his olive press and other facilities. This promises to be both fascinating and informative.

Our annual Oliveti Olive Awards are coming up in August and Secretary - Pauline has included an information sheet within this Newsletter and the actual Entry Form is attached as a PDF. As you may be aware, your annual subscription to Oliveti now includes one free entry into the Olive Awards as we want to encourage as many members as possible to enter. Your participation not only helps to raise the profile of Oliveti, but it also lets customers know your oil is Certified **"Extra Virgin"**, and in addition, a gold silver or bronze award on your bottle is an accolade that is also a great selling asset for your oil.

Looking ahead – pruning is the next activity in the grove and we are all hopeful the weather will be kinder to us in the coming months.

I hope you enjoy these Newsletters and belonging to Oliveti. If you have any suggestions or initiatives that you think we should be exploring or undertaking, please let me know.

**John Pearson** (Chair)  
[info@oliveti.co.nz](mailto:info@oliveti.co.nz) Mob:021 902330

# Salumeria Fontana Olives

- Processing, consulting, landscaping, export
- Olive press, all natural processing (no talc or enzymes)
- Grove design, planting, pruning, remodelling
- Mature Tree sales, removal & transplanting
- Harvesting equipment hire
- Olive oil sales, a selection of our finest oils
- Medicinal olive oil - EU certified high polyphenol olive oil





**Contact Greg:**

Email - [greg.scopas@salumeriafontana.co.nz](mailto:greg.scopas@salumeriafontana.co.nz)

Phone - 0211054182

Address - 7 Harding Road, Hoteo North,  
Auckland, New Zealand

## **OLIVETI Field Day – 28 May 2023**

**Hosted by Anne and John Russell – Tara Iti Estate, Mangawhai.**

*Murray Thoms - Editor*



Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May dawned clear as we headed north from Auckland to join other Oliveti members at the second Field Day of the year at “Tara Iti” – John and Anne Russell’s picturesque property on Tern Point, beside the Mangawhai Estuary.

The 127 hectares rural-residential development known as “Tern Point” was created around 25 years ago and comprises 84 hectares of common land plus 45 individual properties set amid the contoured landscape which also encompasses farmland along the estuary frontage (leased out), a communal olive grove, communal recreational areas including a private boat ramp, and a large shed for the use of all the property owners, plus access and walking tracks over the dunes. Much of land within Tern Point including John and Anne’s property is adjacent to the Wildlife Refuge and is subject to a Conservation Covenant to ensure the development does not negatively impact on the wildlife within the Refuge.

Landowners within Tern Point work closely with the Department of Conservation supporting the trapping of predators undertaken by the Ranger and participating in planting to stabilise the sand dunes. To its North and East is the large sand dune and sandspit managed by the Department of Conservation as the Mangawhai Wildlife Refuge. This refuge is home to some rare birds including the NZ Fairy Tern. The Fairy Tern is officially one of New Zealand’s most endangered bird species. The Tern Point Conservation Covenant additionally requires that dogs must be leashed when being walked in the conservation areas bordering the Refuge.

Cats are completely banned in the subdivision. To the South-East of Tern Point is the very exclusive - Tara Iti Golf Club.



Tern Point's unique location, bordering a Department of Conservation Wildlife Refuge brings with it a collective responsibility for ensuring that no dogs, horses, vehicles or bikes enter the Refuge from Tern Point. Therefore, access to Tern Point is limited by electronic security gates.

John who retired in 2019 after 42 years of general practice in Milford, welcomed us to Tara Iti and proceeded to tell us a little of its unique history. They have around 250 trees planted and feel they have looked after them as best they can, given they are planted on a large sandhill. The larger trees are now approaching 23 years old.

He explained how the developers decided that 'olives' would be the thing that would attract us all here to buy property, so they planted one major grove on the right-hand side as you descend the hill in Tern Point. It has approximately 600 trees. These are communally owned by everyone in the estate and they have are picking once a year. There are also about 200 olive trees planted along either side of Tern Point Road but these are no longer harvested.

"Nothing is perfect in life" says John "and one of the problems we have is that the trees in that grove are getting bigger and harder to look after and unless you have someone looking after them the whole time, they start to get away on you". They now only prune around half these 600 trees as this provides enough fruit for everyone's needs and is more manageable.

Aside from John and Ann's grove, there are five other privately owned groves in Tern Point and between them they have a little over 700 trees in total - so 1500 olive trees all up in Tern Point.

In the early days they got their olives pressed by a press in Mangawhai. This was a traditional basket press. The oil was really, really good but within a month it had gone off which was so disappointing. Subsequently they heard that what was happening, was the person running the press instead of washing and sanitizing

pressing mats, was putting the mats straight into the freezer after each pressing, rather than flushing them out and it was this that possibly led to the contamination.

“Then we tried a chap over in Wellsford who had decided to get into pressing” says John. “When we got our oil back from him, it had a lot of water in the bottom of the containers and that oil was not very good. So, about 2005 after two bad experiences we decided that if you are going to do it properly, you better get your own press so you can take it from growing right through to pressing.”

Early 2000’s John and Anne joined a group of Australians and some other growers from the Hawkes Bay and went off to Italy to look at olive groves, various Oil Presses and associated technology. “We visited several manufacturers of presses and on our return, decided to purchase a 50kg per hour press from a company down in Otorohanga”. John told us that at that time they went on their trip overseas they saw a variety of olive presses both small and large. All the larger ones had vertical centrifuges to finish off the oil by removing small solid particles and any residual moisture. They decided to also buy a vertical separator locally from Westfalia.

In talking about the actual process, John explained that the olives are separated from any leaves, ground into a paste, malaxed for about 40 minutes go through a horizontal separator (decanter). The oil comes out one side of the press and waste out the other. The oil then goes into the vertical separator which centrifuges out all the fine particles and water and you mostly end up with absolutely clear oil in the collecting container. Occasional they tried filtering when the oil had not been that clear. John feels there is a bit of controversy about whether Olive Oil should be clear or not clear and often if you warm olive oil even slightly, it will go clear. The reason for this John explained is Olive oil is not only oleic acid which is the fatty acid we associate with olive oil, it also has several other long-chain fatty acids including some waxes which is what you may see in the bottom of the bottle. These are the waxes and heavier products that sink to the bottom of the container.



In summary, John explained they are happy with the press and the only maintenance they have required over all these years (apart from regular cleaning) is the replacement of the main bearings. “We initially pressed for other growers”

says John “but you could not guarantee the quality of the fruit or when people would turn up with their olives. Of course, pressing olives is a continuous process so when you put through one person's fruit, the next follows on immediately so if you have a batch of fruit that is not very good quality, it will contaminate the next batch”.

“Initially we had a person running our press but when he gave up and at the time, I still had my practice in Milford, so we elected not to continue offering this service”. In addition, Anne told us that the press needs to be thoroughly cleaned after each day's pressing and this takes at least an hour and a half, sometimes two hours so quite labour intensive.

When asked how John and Ann sell their oil, they commented that they started with the same enthusiasm as everyone else and tried everything! John admitted that he is not very good at standing at a stall so over time they have been fortunate to build up a loyal clientele and now just bottle to order for gifts and for friends. Ann feels it is more about personal relationships than the actual oil and they have learnt over time that there is no point in producing more oil in any one year than you can reasonably sell. She says “there is a limit to our storage capacity, and you end up buying more and more fustis to store old oil. We now only pick enough to cater for our fairly small market and to be able to be generous with it as well as supplying ourselves”.

They keep their oil in stainless steel fustis which they flood with Nitrogen to inhibit oxidation of the olive oil. John says “As soon as you pick your fruit it will start to oxidise (deteriorate) so a key recommendation is that your storage crates be shallow and make sure you keep them in the shade out of direct sun so as not to heat the picked olives”. John told us that if they have to keep their fruit overnight, they store it on the floor because the floor is generally colder. They also will use a dehumidifier.

John mentioned that they have some 2013 Leccino olive oil in a Fusti that is still good today – ten years on. A sure testament to the use of inert gas to prevent oxidation. Argon or Nitrogen are equally as effective.

John then invited us to have a walk around their grove and explained the many different varieties of olives they have experimented with to see what would best thrive in the sandy soil they have at Tara Iti. They have a small grove of Ascolano. John had staghorned these two years ago and they now looked very healthy. “The Ascolano has really only ever produced one good crop and with a beautiful oil. But this year again, has only produced a small amount of oil” said John. The other main cultivars they are growing are; Koroneki, Leccino, Pendolino, Frantoio, Picual and J5. The J5 looked to be really thriving and is probably the most resistant to Anthracnose.



Next, we moved into the equipment shed where John has a Canycom 4WD shaft driven mower which he says is really great on the steep slopes and with its low seating position, allows him to get in under the low olive tree branches.

Some years ago, he and Anne also invested in a mobile 5m circular harvesting umbrella net that very much simplifies their olive collection at harvest. This in combination with their two battery-powered hand-held mechanical harvesting tools allow John and Anne to harvest their whole grove on their own.



A big thank you to John and Anne Russell for hosting us at Tara Iti Estate.

## HOW OLIVES ARE PROCESSED INTO OIL

**Modern technology has replaced traditional methods, from crushing olives to the final extraction process.**

By Paolo DeAndreis

May. 2, 2023 13:51 UTC

Extracting oil from the fruit of the olive tree is a complex process, a challenge faced by the people of the Mediterranean for thousands of years.

Today, highly sophisticated electronically controlled milling equipment quickly replaces the large stone grinders used for centuries to crush olive drupes.





**Olivado Limited**

**For all your olive pressing and  
bottling needs.**

**Ph. 09 407 3080**

While these traditional mills are still widely used, the sector's continued efforts to achieve the optimal organoleptic characteristics and health properties have seen the technology used to produce olive oil change rapidly.

### **The technology behind the milling process**

The incorporation of state-of-the-art technology has paved the way for the increasing quality of olive oil production.

Producers can now tailor the transformation process to their specific needs, altering operating times, temperatures, atmospheric composition, etc.

"Without these advancements, we would not have the extraordinarily high quality of our olive oils," Furio Battelini, the technical director of Agraria Riva del Garda, told Olive Oil Times.

"Much technology is yet to be developed, but it exerts a crucial role," he added. "Whoever aims at high quality in olive oil making needs to invest in it, try it out and find the best settings for their olives."

Successfully producing the highest-quality olive oil heavily depends on agronomics, technology and the experience of trained technicians.

Whereas olive oil producers once harvested all their fruits at once to transform them at the end of the harvest, modern producers often deploy specific milling settings for the different [olive varieties](#) they grow.

They can now explore the ripening of the olive fruits to identify the perfect moment for transformation. Each cultivar is often harvested and transformed in separate moments.

### **First step: crushing the fruit**

Once the olives reach the mill, the leaves left over from the harvest are mechanically removed, and the fruits are washed.



**For all your print needs**

- Olive oil labels – small runs our specialty
- Business cards
- Brochures
- Promotional material

**Phone: 09 438 1194**  
 Email Bruce: [sales@tdprint.co.nz](mailto:sales@tdprint.co.nz)  
 Visit: Unit 2, 17-19 South End Ave,  
 Raumanga, Whangarei

**T&D Print**  
[tdprint.co.nz](http://tdprint.co.nz)

30 x 3.15 in



In traditional mills, olives are crushed with a procedure substantially unchanged for centuries: heavy grinders attached to a central column crush the fruits.

Modern mills use advanced machines with hammer breakers, blades or rotary disks, allowing for a quicker transformation of significantly larger amounts of olives. Additionally, these tools greatly limit the exposition of the olives to oxygen compared to traditional methods, preserving their healthy and organoleptic properties.

Both crushing methods result in a raw olive paste made of the peel of the fruit, its pulp and fragmented pits. The paste also contains small olive oil drops and water, which is naturally contained in the olive drupes as they develop on the tree.

“This is one of the most delicate steps in olive oil making,” Battelini said. “Millers have to take into account the temperature of the olives themselves as they reach the mill.”

“If harvested on warmer days, such levels might easily exceed the 20 °C to 22 °C, which I consider the maximum to obtain a high-quality product,” he added.

### **Second step: kneading the olive paste**

In a modern mill, the freshly produced raw paste is transferred into the kneader, also called a malaxer.

The kneader is a tank equipped with blades that slowly stir the paste. The stirring process allows the blades to break up the water-oil emulsions created by the crushing.

Furthermore, the process allows larger drops of olive oil to form, easing their separation from water, a crucial advantage for the final extraction.

To make the **BEST** of your produce,  
you need the **BEST** equipment!



**Olive Grove and  
Orchard Equipment**

Phone 09 945 0890  
Email [info@grovesupply.co.nz](mailto:info@grovesupply.co.nz)  
[grovesupply.co.nz](http://grovesupply.co.nz)



**The  
Grove  
Supply Co.**

Proud new owners of Coast to Coast Trading Co.

For the delicate process to succeed, the olive paste is gently warmed. Still, the kneading process temperature will never exceed 27 °C in meeting the strict requirements for extra virgin olive oil.

The temperature is considered the perfect balance between protecting the best qualities of olive oil and the production needs.

Kneading completion times vary significantly depending on the type of machines being used, the amount of olives, their stage of ripeness and the production goals in terms of quantity and quality. "The shorter the time, the better if your goal is quality," Battelini said.

### **Third step: olive oil extraction**

In traditional mills, the raw paste is not subjected to kneading. Instead, it is carefully spread onto circular discs with a hole at the centre.

Piles of these discs are slowly pressed together, separating the oil and water from the pulp, which remains on the discs.

Given the goals of high-quality production, modern olive milling has adopted new means of extraction, no longer based on pressing.

Oil extraction is now done with a decanter, or centrifuge, which spins very quickly to separate the oil in the paste from the water and pulp. Finally, the separated olive oil is transferred from the decanter into steel containers.

Depending on the machines' specifics, olive oil coming out of the decanter might still contain traces of pulp, air or water.

Filtering equipment is often used to speed up a natural process that would separate the olive oil from those particles, obtaining olive oil ready to be bottled and consumed.

### **How to store freshly produced olive oil**

Since the domestication of the olive tree, producers have adopted a wide array of containers to store their olive oil. Terracotta amphorae were used for a long time throughout the whole Mediterranean.

Nowadays, glass and more modern materials, such as fiberglass and plastic, are used. Still, most extra virgin olive oil producers store their oil in stainless steel tanks capped with inert gas, such as nitrogen. Topping olive oil with an inert gas prevents oxidation.

The tanks are usually kept within a temperature range of 14 °C to 18 °C to preserve the olive oil's healthy and organoleptic qualities. From there, olive oil may be bottled and distributed.

### **Alternative extraction methods: the Sinolea technology**

An alternative olive oil extraction technique developed at the beginning of the last century is known as the Sinolea procedure, based on the surface tension properties of specific metals.

The goal is to separate olive oil from the other contents of the paste. Metal blades are immersed in the mix, and a natural adhering process will make the olive oil only stick to the metal. After, the blade can be removed, and the oil it carries can be conveyed to a dedicated container.

In modern plants, the Sinolea method starts during kneading, where metal blades separate olive oil from the raw olive paste.

### **Milling techniques continue to advance.**

Modern technology has revolutionized the production of high-quality olive oil. Producers can quickly process large amounts of olives with advanced, electronically controlled milling equipment while preserving their healthy and sensory properties. However, research across the olive oil-producing world continues to improve quality, productivity and efficiency further while keeping sustainability in mind.

AgriSea New Zealand Seaweed Ltd proudly sponsoring the Oliveti Group

**New Zealand Seaweed concentrates suitable for  
all Organic and Conventional orchards.  
Healthy Vegetative Growth and Bountiful Yield using  
AgriSea Soil and Foliar Nutrition.**




Brett Martin | Northland Area Field Consultant | Horticulture/Viticulture  
027 263 3315 | [brett@agrisea.co.nz](mailto:brett@agrisea.co.nz) | 0800 SEA WEED 732 933 [www.agrisea.co.nz](http://www.agrisea.co.nz)



## Oliveti Olive Oil Awards 2023

Now that harvest is over it's time to think about the Oliveti Awards. Thanks to the atrocious weather, harvests have been down a bit, but I believe there is some great tasting oils out there. Please get your entries in and we'll see how your oils stack up.

Our oils have continued to improve over the years that we have been running the awards and our aim is to keep improving. We have 3 great judges with an extensive knowledge of judging oils in New Zealand and overseas. The Oliveti Certified EVOO quality sticker is awarded on an annual basis to oils that meet the standards set out for the laboratory test and pass the taste test by our judges.

We are also including again this year, the Gold Star Awards for the oils with high polyphenol counts. This is not a mandatory part of the sensory test.

Remember – there is one free entry in the awards included in your annual subscription.

I look forward to receiving your entries.

*Pauline Young*  
*Secretary - Oliveti Northland Inc*

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

All entry forms must be received by August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Please courier to:

**P Young**  
**297 Heatley Road Whakapirau**  
**RD1 Maungaturoto 0583**

*Please use Courier Post to ensure safe delivery*

Any queries please contact me:

Ph: 09 280 9905 Mob: 02702880462

or email: [secretary@oliveti.co.nz](mailto:secretary@oliveti.co.nz)

***NB: See attachment for actual Entry Form***

### Conditions of Entry

These awards are open to Oliveti members only.

Every entry must be from olives grown in New Zealand.

Each entry must be accompanied by a copy of test results showing:

1. The free fatty acid level of the oil (*must be below 0.8% and expressed as a percentage or g/100*) and
2. The peroxide value (*this must be below 15*) and expressed as mEq/kg of olive oil.

For those members who also provide laboratory assayed "**Total Polyphenol Count**" (TPP) for their EVOO, and expressed as mg/Kg of olive oil, they will be awarded "**Healthy Oil Stars**" based on the following criteria:

<b>&lt;249mg/Kg</b>	- no star
<b>250-499mg/Kg</b>	- one star
<b>500-799mg/kg</b>	- two stars
<b>800-1199mg/Kg</b>	- three stars
<b>&gt;1200mg/Kg</b>	- four stars

Oils must be of the current 2023 season only, and details provided must be for oil produced under the label for this harvest.

All entries must carry a label that states the year of production and the region from which the olives were sourced. A temporary label may be used.

All entries must be compliant with New Zealand Food and Safety Standards and Regulations with regards to both processing and labelling.

### Entry Procedures and Fees

All entries must be received by **August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**. The first entry is free, each subsequent entry must be accompanied by a fee of \$40.00 (GST included) per entry. Oil may only be entered once, but an entrant may submit more than one oil. Please pay by direct credit to Oliveti Northland Inc:

Account no. **ASB 12 3099 0666999 00**

*We do not accept cheques. Please enter 'Oil Awards' as the Reference and your Name/Trading Name in Details.*

A copy of the completed entry form, clearly identifying the name of the entrant and the classes entered, must accompany entries.

**One bottle of not less than 250ml is required per entry.**

If entering Flavoured Oils, “**infused**” applies to flavours added to oils after processing; “**fused**” applies to product that is pressed with the olives (Agrumato) eg., citrus fruit.

**Schedule of Classes**

- Class 1: Single Varietal – Delicate
- Class 2: Blended Oil - Delicate
- Class 3: Single Varietal - Medium
- Class 4: Blended Oil – Medium
- Class 5: Single Varietal - Intense
- Class 6: Blended Oil - Intense
- Class 7: Please specify if “infused” or “fused”.

**Judging and Awards**

Oils will be blind judged by our panel of food industry experts on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

Oils will be rated Gold, Silver, Bronze, or no award. “Best in Class” will be chosen from the Gold awards in each class. These will then go forward for the “Best in Show” Award and the winner will receive the distinctive Oliveti Trophy.

The judges’ decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into. All results will be published on the website.

**Awards Stickers** – Winners of Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards can order these in packs of 500 from Pauline Young, Secretary Oliveti Northland Inc. Healthy Oil Gold Stars will also be available for qualifying oils.

**Oliveti Certified Extra Virgin Olive Oil Stickers** – If your oil passes the sensory test - whether it wins an award or not, you will receive 100 Oliveti Certified EVOO stickers at no cost. Additional stickers can be ordered if required.

**OLIVETI EVOO AWARDS JUDGES - 2023**

**Roberto M.M. Zecca**

In 1989 Roberto Zecca and his wife Christine purchased Castellare di Ugnana in the Chianti region of Tuscany and over the next 4 years they dedicated their time to restoring several medieval structures and an ancient olive orchard of over 1250 trees. Roberto quickly became an expert in “Olivicoltura”, learning the latest harvesting methods, organic farming, cold pressing techniques and bottling his own Tuscan extra virgin olive oil.

In 1995 Roberto returned to California and in 1996 was elected to the California Olive Oil Council Board of Directors and founded the first panel of tasters in the U.S. under the regulations of the International Olive Oil Council in Madrid. That same year he attended a course for professional tasters in Italy and graduated as the first American Panel Taste Leader to be certified by the IOOC.

Roberto was Chairman of the world’s largest olive oil competition held at the Los Angeles County Fair from 2000 to 2005.

Roberto lectures worldwide and currently judges for Olives New Zealand.

## Geoff Webster

Geoff Webster has worked in the food industry in a wide variety of technical roles. Many of the companies he has worked for process oil and fat, including Hansells Food Group, his most recent employer. Geoff has experience as an olive oil certified taster with Olives New Zealand and enjoys tasting great New Zealand extra virgin olive oils. He is a current judge for the Royal Easter Show Olive oil awards. He is currently a self-employed consultant for the food industry.

## Georges Feghali

Georges is from Lebanon and currently living and working in New Zealand. He is qualified as an olive oil expert from Jaen University Spain and licenced in Food Technology and Agricultural Technology.

In Lebanon he was the assistant panel head at the Olive Oil Tasting Centre, Beirut. He attended many EVOO National competitions in Lebanon since 2012 and has been involved in projects such as looking at the quality of olive oil in the Lebanese market, integrated pest management and olive oil production. In New Zealand he has worked with the Olive Press, Wairarapa and was Quality and Compliance Manager at Olivado Ltd. Georges has participated in the judging panel with Olives New Zealand since 2016.

## OLIVE OIL TO GET MORE EXPENSIVE IN NZ THANKS TO MEDITERRANEAN DROUGHT

Brianna Mcilraith



*Olive oil is expected to go up in price.*

Olive oil is set to get more expensive after a poor season in the Mediterranean led to the highest global prices in 26 years.

Emma Glover, executive officer of Olives NZ, said New Zealand only produced about 10% of the olive oil that was consumed in the country each year.

Companies that imported olive oil from the Mediterranean would see their costs increase, she said.

Heat and drought in the Mediterranean, particularly in Spain, had caused global olive oil prices to reach a 26-year-high.

The recent olive harvest from October to February produced 50% less than the usual output, forcing prices up to almost US\$6000 (NZ\$9677) per metric ton, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

This was the highest since 1997 when it was US\$6225. Sunflower oil had also risen in price due to the war in Ukraine. The price of Olivani extra-virgin olive oil was \$1.28 per 100ml in February 2022 according to a Consumer NZ study. It was now \$2 at Countdown. Harvest extra virgin olive oil was \$1 per 100ml last year and was now \$1.60.

Marlborough's only olive press gearing up for new season. Glover said the majority of New Zealand producers grew their own olives or had local contract growers.

There were indications of some tough times locally, too.

Harvest season for New Zealand producers had only just started and until all the olives were off the trees and pressed the industry would not know exactly how the season had been, she said.

Olive trees grow in warm and dry climates, and the optimal temperature ranges from 15C to 26C.

Nelson/Marlborough and Kapiti were reporting positive signs, while Canterbury, Central Otago and Wairarapa had varied reports.

Northland, Auckland and Hawke's Bay, the areas affected by the cyclones and wet summer, would predominately have a lighter harvest.

A spokesperson for Hawke's Bay-based The Village Press said 2023 had been a "triple whammy" when it comes to olive oil supply.

"We are Hawke's Bay, and a lot of our best groves are in the Esk Valley - so it is pretty obvious that we have supply issues, and our trusted farmers have even bigger issues than we do.

"As there is no real olive oil lobby group, we are not even sure how to go about getting support from the government for this." The company's The Village Press brand relied on New Zealand extra virgin olive oil, and its The Global Village brand sourced olive oil from single farms in Spain and Italy.

Its Spanish suppliers had been hit by climate-driven issues and production had been low, forcing costs up, he said.

"Put this together with the effect of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on sunflower and other oils, and the cooking oils aisle is, unfortunately, not going to be an easy one for the shopper to navigate," he said.

"We are now 20 years old in providing the best oils to New Zealand and will get through this, but it's tough."

**EDITOR – Murray Thoms** Comments/contributions to: [murraythomsnz@gmail.com](mailto:murraythomsnz@gmail.com)

Back issues of the Newsletter available online at: <https://oliveti.co.nz/category/news/>

**2023 Oliveti Committee contact details:**

<b>Chairman:</b> John Pearson	<i>info@oliveti.co.nz</i>	021 902330
<b>Secretary:</b> Pauline Young	<i>secretary@oliveti.co.nz</i>	09 2809905
<b>Treasurer:</b> Murray Thoms	<i>treasurer@oliveti.co.nz</i>	021 990608
<b>Committee Members:</b>		
Adrienne Gilmore	<i>adrienz@icloud.com</i>	027 7333890
Ewen Hutchinson	<i>ewen.hutch46@gmail.com</i>	021 770919
Les Woodhams	<i>leskaywoodhams@gmail.com</i>	0274 129344

## LEADING BOTTLE SUPPLIER - COMAG AGENCIES IS NEW ADVERTISING SPONSOR FOR OLIVETI NORTHLAND INC

**Comag Agencies are a New Zealand owned and operated business, specialising in glass and plastic packaging and dispensing solutions**

Oliveti welcome our newest sponsor – Comag Agencies. They have on offer an extensive range of glass jars and bottles, plastic bottles, plastic jars, cosmetic packaging and pumps, caps and closures, jerry cans, trigger sprayers and bottles, jerry cans, powder pots and tablet bottles.

**There are three sizes available in the oil bottles.**

**250ml** – 60/carton, **500ml** – 50/carton and **750ml** – 35/carton.

Please check the website for all current pricing [comag.co.nz](http://comag.co.nz) under Glass Jars and Packaging/Glass Bottles.

Buying from Comag Agencies is easy, they have an eCommerce facility, simply visit [comag.co.nz](http://comag.co.nz) for their full range of products. If you would like to speak to a Customer Service Representative please don't hesitate to call them on 09 448 5960 or send your enquiry through to [sales@comag.co.nz](mailto:sales@comag.co.nz). They ship nationwide and also offer a Click and Collect service (Auckland only).



## Suppliers of Quality Glass Oil Bottles

Ph. 09 448 5960 | [sales@comag.co.nz](mailto:sales@comag.co.nz) | [comag.co.nz](http://comag.co.nz)