

# REPORT ON OLIVE TREES AT TAKAHOA BAY ESTATE

From Don Windley of Echo Valley Olives Ltd Mangawhai  
Prepared following visit to olive grove during July 2007

There are approximately 800 trees of 4-6 years old planted on a north west facing sloping to gently contour field with a combination of ridge flat areas and gently sloping faces falling away from the ridge. There are some low wet areas where the olive trees have failed, these areas are too wet for replanting.

All the existing trees are showing neglect through lack of knowledge and maintenance. These trees are in need of attention to bring them to full health and crop bearing condition.

**STORM DAMAGE;** there are 30 trees that have been knocked down by a recent severe south easterly gale during a storm. Of these 30 trees probably half will not be salvaged as they will have suffered severe root damage. Some trees will be able to be recovered by standing up and supporting with stakes and ties.

**STAKING ;** The storm damage highlights the need for the trees to be supported by stakes until they are at least 8 years old. Olives have shallow root systems and need two stakes per tree until they establish a well formed root system. Stakes need to be 50x 50 ml treated pine or macrocarpa or gum which are rot resistant And will last for eight years.

**DISEASE ;** There is some evidence of the fungal disease PEACOCK SPOT which shows as a series of black rings on the leaves. This is not right through the grove and will be easily controlled.

**PRUNING ;** Pruning to an open vase shape will reduce windage of the trees in this high wind prone field and is essential to shape the trees for future growth and crop bearing. Pruning also helps to reduce disease risk by opening up the trees to allow air and sun into the tree.

**GRASS MANAGEMENT ;** The Grove is mowed regularly and weed sprayed around the base of the Olive Trees. This management plan is fine as is.

**STOCK :** if stock is to be grazed for grass control there must only be sheep allowed in to the grove. The trees are old enough to withstand the minor damage sheep will inflict on the bark. If replacement trees are to be planted they will have to be screened around them for protection. Stock must be removed from grove at least 2 months prior to harvest ( because of droppings)

**OVERVIEW:** The remaining trees in the high areas will need to be staked as all have loosened their roots in the recent storm. Overall the trees are in good health but will benefit from staking and ties and spraying with copper oxide as an anti fungal precaution.

**RECOMMENDATIONS ;** A soil test will determine a fertilizer programme for the future and help the overall health of the grove.

RETURNS; The return that can be expected is difficult to estimate as a lot depends on how much effort is put in now to save this grove.

One healthy tree at 7 years old in a good year will produce approx. 15 kilos of olives  
This will increase as trees mature.

In two years time after remedial work is carried out it reasonable to expect each tree to bear 15- 20 kilos

Say 800 trees bear 15 kilos each = 12000 kilos

Currently you could sell fruit on the tree for \$0.50 cents per kilo

12000 kilos x .50 cents = \$6000.00

This is an estimate only and depends on many factors as with all horticulture.

Weather can play such a big part in the size of the annual crop.

Olive Trees also have a bi annual habit with heavy crops one year and light crops the next.

COSTS; This is based on our charges for the following work . If the estate owners and managers were to use the services of the existing farm manager costing will be different. We are happy to work with the farm manager.

PRUNING ; \$ 6.00 per tree biannually

SPRAYING \$ 2.00 per tree annually

STAKING \$ 15.00 per tree includes ties, two stakes per tree and labour. This is a one only charge and is only needed on the high ground trees ( approximately 500 existing trees )

REPLANTING: \$20.00 per tree includes the tree and rabbit guard stakes and ties

FERTILIZING ; this will have to be quoted after results of soil test has been received.

VARIETIES; at the time of writing some more research needs to be done to determine the original cultivars planted which will determine the choice of replacement trees.

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