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NEW ZEALAND OLIVE GROVE 2014 CENSUS REPORT

Executive Summary

Olives New Zealand conducted a major Grove Census in 2012 and this has been updated in 2014 to reflect 2013 changes, groves previously not included and additional data. The 2014 survey forms were sent out to a total of 165 grower members and responses were received from 100 members and 4 non-members. There are now 210 groves in the database, compared with 172 in 2012.

The grand total of live trees in the database is now 317,619 trees compared with 276,205 in 2012. The ten most planted varieties across the country in order are; Frantoio, Leccino, Barnea, Koroneiki, Manzanillo, Picual, Picholene, J5, Pendolino and Kalamata. Hawke's Bay has the largest number of trees followed by Auckland, Northland and then Wairarapa.

The most common grove size ranges between 501 and 1,000 trees. There are six super large commercial groves in New Zealand; Auckland, Hawke's Bay (3), Marlborough and Nelson. Northland has the largest number of groves followed by Wairarapa and then Kapiti. The most common grove matrix is 6x5. Approximately 31% of olive groves are irrigated. Approximately 16% have a spray program, the majority for Peacock Spot and Anthracnose. Some 18 olive groves reported to be organic. More than half of olive groves are located on flat land.

The most popular form of harvesting is using hand held harvesters followed by machine harvesting. The majority of olive groves produce olive oil with a number also producing table olives. The average oil yield across the country in 2013 was 11.7%, however there is significant variation across regions. From the supplied data on harvest tonnage, it is apparent that there is great potential to increase crop load.

There are 30 processing facilities in the database with eight different makes.

The Grove Census helps the olive industry understand how it is structured so that it can represent itself credibly and to undertake benchmarking. The data has provided input into national and international projects and research.

The Grove Census also enables growers to benchmark the performance of their grove against other groves in the same region and nationwide. Individual grove reports have been produced showing growers their yield and tonnage by variety compared to the regional and national averages.

The data in the Grove Census database has the potential to enable correlations to be drawn in a number of areas, for example on effectiveness of spray programs to harvest tonnage. To enable correlations to be meaningful a higher level of consistent contributions is necessary.

The Olive Grove Census is a 'work in progress' and is updated as more responses are received.

The full 30 page report is available to all participants and to researchers, from Olives New Zealand.