



## GSOGA Field Day

Sunday 24 March 2024

Lisadurne Hill 159 Heily Rd Rushworth



**11am Arrival** - coffee & tea

**11:30 am Identification & management of Olive Lace Bug (OLB) & Peacock Spot (Russ Knight)**

*Life-cycle of OLB*

*Management of OLB*

*Management of Peacock Spot*

**12:15pm Short workshop on making table olives (Natalia Lescano \*\*\*)**

*Different types/styles of table olives & how to prepare them (black natural & green natural)*

*Which varieties make the best table olives*

*Tips for producing high quality olives*

**1pm Lunch** - bring a chair if you can

Cost \$20 for GSOGA members, \$50 for non-members.

Non-members can join on the day.

RSVP [russ.lisadurnehill@gmail.com](mailto:russ.lisadurnehill@gmail.com) by 17 March 2024

**\*\*\* Natalia Lescano**

- Food technology with specialization in table olives

- Since 2004 only working in the olive area (laboratory, & quality & production consulting for processes & new products & industrial management)

- Extensive knowledge of quality management systems.

Lead auditor in FSSC 22000 and other certifications

*"Always I am focusing on product quality and good productivity"*

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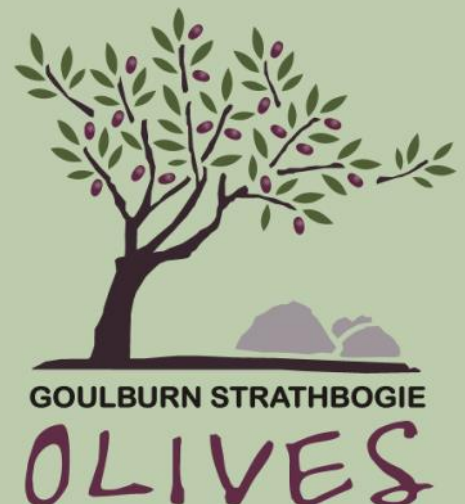
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## A note from the President

Dear GSOGA members,

As most of you will know, olive lace bug has emerged as a serious problem this year. A significant number of members have been affected including our grove.

Left untreated, OLB has the potential to decimate a grove. The good news is that OLB can be controlled by the timely & effective use of insecticides. Be vigilant, especially in early spring. Spray the entire grove as soon as an infestation is detected.

I have been contacted by a number of members who are looking to buy EVOO. Please let me know if you have any to sell and I will link you up with a potential buyer.

We are fast approaching harvest. By all accounts, it will be early this year. Due to a world-wide shortage of EVOO and forecasts of a smaller Australian crop this year, the price of EVOO will almost certainly be considerably higher this year.

Again, an association such as GSOGA is only as strong as its membership's commitment to it. We look forward to meeting you all at future GSOGA events.

I wish you a safe and productive harvest.

*Russ Knight*

## NED - Preserving Pickled and Pressed for the future

National edeposit (NED) is an exciting collaboration between Australia's nine national, state and territory libraries, responding to the major challenge of capturing and preserving the digital documentary history of Australia for the future. The NED service provides for the deposit, management, storage, preservation, discovery and delivery of published electronic material across Australia.

The NED members are the National Library of Australia, Libraries ACT, Libraries Tasmania, Northern Territory Library, State Library of New South Wales, State Library of Queensland, State Library of South Australia, State Library Victoria and the State Library of Western Australia.

Legal deposit legislation mandates NED member libraries to collect the entire publications of individual jurisdictions. For many years these libraries have built collections of print publications that provide the documentary history of 19th and 20th century Australia, but the arrival of digital media and the internet late last century has been and remains the great disrupter.

For libraries, it means that publications are no longer just print; print formats – books, journals, newspapers, magazines, maps, sheet music – are now available in electronic, and new electronic-only formats proliferate, including websites, social media, and blogs. Digital technologies provide opportunities to facilitate legal deposit by improving deposit processes, and streamlining the complex tasks of cataloguing, indexing and recording, managing and providing access to deposited publications.

Librarian,  
State Library of Victoria

GSOGA is the acronym of the  
*Goulburn-Strathbogie Olive Growers Association.*

The Association is actively developing information and support services for olive growers, who are mainly situated in the State of Victoria. GSOGA is an independent not-for-profit organisation. GSOGA's Honorary Treasurer, Tina Knight, is a Board Member of the Australian Olive Association (AOA). Tina represents the interests of the Victorian Olive Association (VOA).

GSOGA publishes a members' newsletter which is distributed by email attachment to members. The Association has approximately 40 financial members. The newsletter, called *Pickled & Pressed*, is published 3-4 times each year. A sample digital copy of *Pickled & Pressed* is attached to this letter.

*Pickled & Pressed* is written by members of the Association and other contributors such as guest speakers at GSOGA functions. Peter Jeffery is designated as the Editor of *Pickled & Pressed*. Peter worked with a professional designer, Elizabeth Wright, and Marjan Symington to improve the presentation and editorial precision of the newsletter.

GSOGA regularly prints a limited number of *Pickled & Pressed* for hard-copy distribution and display at functions.

Please advise procedures for GSOGA to comply with legal deposit law.

Peter L Jeffery  
0418864177



# OH&S: Is your equipment prepared for the 2024 harvest?

## The harvest is only some weeks away and it is time to prepare your equipment.

### Safety gear

Do you have protective gear for your yourself, your family members, friends and your staff? These items may include gloves, helmets, safety glasses, earplugs, high-visibility jackets, boots and masks.

### Maintain your Equipment & Machinery

Try your equipment before the harvest to see whether it is (still) working well. Make sure your equipment is well maintained, cleaned, sharpened and repaired. If your equipment has safety guards make sure they are attached properly and functional.

### Training

Only use the equipment if you can recall how it works. It might be a good idea to get the manual out to refresh your memory and always follow the operating procedures. You can't find the manual or you find it difficult to understand.... Many manuals are now online, or you can often find Youtube videos with step-by-step instructions which can be very clear and enormously helpful. If you have outsiders (family, friends or staff) it is particularly important to conduct safety training and to document standard operating procedures.

### Spare parts

Equipment seems to break-down at the most inconvenient times. It might be a good idea to buy some spare parts now. You know best what you may need for your equipment and machinery. It could be seals, washer, belts, chains, fuses, hydraulic hoses, cable ties and tape.

### Tape

How useful is duct tape (or duck tape). For more than 50 years, NASA astronauts have relied on duct tape as a quick fix for everything from a lunar rover on the moon to an air leak on board the International Space Station.

Duck Tape®

The term "duck tape" today refers to a specific brand of duct tape. Duck Brand® duct tape takes its name from the original name of duct tape. This name came from two factors. First, the tape was originally made from an army green cotton duck fabric. And second, the water-resistant properties of the tape were said to repel water like the back of a duck.

### Cleaning

It is a perfect time to clean your sheds, floors, tanks and containers. Oil is easiest cleaned with caustic soda. You will need to be very careful when using straight sodium hydroxide as it can cause severe burns in all tissues that it comes in contact with. Sodium hydroxide poses a particular threat to the eyes, possibly leading to severe eye damage. So ... if you use caustic soda, wear protective clothing, gloves and glasses.

### Trailers

If you are going to have to use a trailer, it is a good idea to make sure the tyres are sound and the lights, brake lights and indicator lights are working.

Marjan Symington



# AOA Report March 2024

## - Olive Lace Bug



AUSTRALIAN OLIVE  
ASSOCIATION LTD

Since Christmas, Olive Lace Bug has been the reason for an increased number of calls to me looking for information and advice. It prompted us to have a really good look at our own grove where we found three sites with signs of this pest. Parts of north, north east and north central Victoria, and southern NSW have reported this pest and it seems to be particularly bad around the Myrtleford area.

Owing to its exponential breeding rate, OLB can become widespread in a grove unless it is detected early. An appropriate pesticide spray program will deal with this problem effectively. One of the callers also rang about a stand of elm trees near his grove having signs of OLB. This bug affects trees other than olives.

Below is a link to an AOA webinar presented by Robert Spooner-Hart: Managing Olive Lace Bug.

<https://vimeo.com/854555092/273119368c?>



*Managing Olive Lace Bug - webinar*

The other calls in the last few months have been people seeking help with harvesting and processing. Usually these calls are from people who have bought a farm with an existing, mostly small, olive grove on it. While they don't want to bulldoze the trees, unless they can find a workable solution, this is what they will have to do.

Groves in the Geelong area have been able to contact Steve Parker for a possible solution. More recently, Jared Bettio from Rio Vista olives (0456 823 443), just across the border in SA, is now offering harvesting and mobile processing contracting for the north and central parts of Victoria. Jared is a grower and processor who looks for excellence in all the work he does.

In the last few years a lot of olive groves have come up for sale with the owners finding it increasingly difficult to manage their grove and have no viable next generation solution. One of the topics for the AOA conference at the end of this year is co-ops – structures and legal frameworks. Informal co-ops have worked in the past and it may be a solution for small growers.

*Tina Knight*  
Victorian Director AOA

*“...OLB can become widespread in a grove unless it is detected early”*

# Exploring New Horizons: Oasis Olives at FOODEX JAPAN 2024

FOODEX JAPAN 2024 served as a global stage for over 2,500 food and beverage companies from 60 countries, attracting 76,100 visitors over the course of four days. Oasis Olives embarked on this trip to Tokyo with a modest goal – to establish a foothold in the Japanese market by securing 1 or 2 customers.

John had broken his leg a few months ago and could not go, so our son Owen and his fiancé Evelyn came to help. We took with us 80 x 200ml bottles with Arbosana, Picual and Frantoio EVOO, 10 gift boxes (to give to good prospects), some samples of table olives, brochures, business cards and a tablecloth, all in our luggage (105 kgs in total).

We had a booth with Austrade (The Australian Trade and Investment Commission). We found out that Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania had their own stands. It is unclear to us why we were not just 'Australia', like other countries. Among the Victorian olive growers present were Cobram Estate, Grampians Olives and us, Oasis Olives. Over the four days we showcased our products, realizing soon the need to offer tasting experiences to potential customers, which we had not planned.

We are unfamiliar with the Japanese market, and we relied on guidance from Austrade staff and Japanese participants in nearby booths. We offered tastings to serious buyers, engaging in numerous conversations despite language barriers. Austrade staff stepped in as interpreters, facilitating serious meetings in separate rooms.

We discovered that most Japanese importers traditionally sourced oil from Spain, a country facing supply shortages due to two poor harvests. Another problem for Japanese buyers is that the shipping route via the Suez Canal is impossible at the moment so the ships from Spain to Japan have to go the long way around Africa.

Most visitors to our booth were surprised that olives were grown in Australia, raising questions about pricing, prior sales to Japan, distribution channels, shipping costs, and delivery timelines. There was much more interest in bottled oils than in bulk supply.

Our booth was opposite to a big stand from Ukraine. Their trade minister came out to support the various businesses.

Owen has been actively following up the contacts made at FOODEX JAPAN 2024 through email, hopeful to secure 1 or 2 customers. Going to Japan has opened the door to potential opportunities in a market that is still discovering Australian olive oil.

*Marjan Symington*



*“ ... we discovered that most Japanese importers traditionally sourced oil from Spain ”*

# Our Experience with a Major Olive Lace Bug Infestation

We have about 350 trees and they are now approximately 22 years old. We began noticing Olive Lace Bug (OLB) about 12 years ago. They would appear in early Spring on a few of the perimeter trees. The grove backs on to heavily wooded forest and scrub.

Our advice at the time was that if the trees were healthy they would not be affected by OLB and also by applying Dolomite in the fertilizer this may help.

In 2015 we had a more widespread infestation and we used an Organophosphate chemical called Dimethoate (Rogor) as a leaf spray in Spring. This was very effective but also highly toxic to humans such that the APVMA have suspended its registration from 19th September 2023.

Then in 2017 we were overseas for most of the Spring and did not check the olive trees until April (we only visit the property from time to time). There was a good crop of olives but also a heavy infestation with OLB. We decided to pick anyway (using Alice Battery operated rakes and Olive catching trolleys). When we had filled a 450kg Nally bin the olives were absolutely crawling with OLB. We tried to hose them off but to no avail so we dumped the olives in the paddock and purchased some PyGanic (Sumitomo) fast acting botanical insecticide (13gm/L Natural Pyrethrins) and sprayed the trees with a concentration of 200ml/100L. PyGanic has only a one day withholding period, is safe to use, has low impact on the environment and high impact on the pests.

This was very effective and so 2 weeks later there was no sign of OLB so we picked the remainder of the Grove.

In 2018 we learned about Samurai (Clothianidin) "Sumitomo Chemical" and sprayed the trees in Spring (at the first sign of OLB) at the rate of 35-40gm/100L using MAXX Organosilicone surfactant at 50ml/100L. That was very successful but a lot of work.

We were then informed that we could try using Samurai around the base of the tree at 6-8gm/tree either in solid form or dissolved in 1L water. This method has been used in Apple and Citrus to control Mealy Bug and Woolly Aphid but has not yet been approved for use in Olive groves. It is, therefore "Off Label Use" and cannot be recommended by the company. It is important to water the granules well in with irrigation or to make sure that a "Rain event" is about to happen soon.

We tried this method in late September 2019. We had no trace of OLB that year and there has been no trace for the last 4 years until we noticed a small presence of OLB on some peripheral trees this year. The trees look healthy and have fruit so we have been advised to monitor for the next few weeks and if we do need to take action we would use PyGanic. Next Spring we shall certainly be using Samurai again.

*Clive and Sue Ogilvie  
Thornton Grove, Thornton Vic*

**"This method  
has been used  
in Apple and  
Citrus to  
control Mealy  
Bug and Woolly  
Aphid ..."**



# Growing Organic Olive Groves: Balancing Advantages and Challenges

“Organic” olive growing refers to a pattern of sustainable farming practices rooted in maintaining and enhancing soil fertility and tree health without resorting to synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers. Organic farming comes with both advantages and challenges that growers must carefully consider. Certified organic farmers are registered with and inspected by one of the Certifying Bodies who base their standards on the National Standard used by DAFF for export certification. See link below

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/contact/phone/approved-certifying-bodies>



## Advantages:

- **Environmental:** Embracing organic methods contributes to the preservation of the environment, soil, and water resources.
- **Protecting Beneficial Insects:** By not using harmful pesticides, organic olive growers protect and promote beneficial insects essential for a balanced ecosystem.
- **Robust healthy trees:** The organic farming process requires growers to build the vigor of their trees so that the trees can resist pests and diseases themselves rather than requiring synthetic pesticides and fungicides. This is not easy; in particular it requires sustained determination to track down nutrition deficits, even for what may seem to be very minor elements; careful systematic pruning and recycling of prunings as mulch; and building the soil biome so that nutrients are available when the trees need them. But when it succeeds the result can be amazing; a vigorous tree can have completely clean foliage within metres of a tree riddled with lace-bug because it is missing some vital nutrition.
- **Premium price:** The organic label allows growers to sell their olive oil at a premium price. Buyers are confident that the olive oil are table olives do not contain potentially harmful compounds
- **Feeling good for looking after the planet.**

## Disadvantages:

- **Financial:** The foremost challenge in organic olive growing is the higher costs associated with organic farming practices. From organic fertilizers to the certification process, the financial burden can be significant, particularly for smaller groves. The additional costs must be balanced by finding buyers willing to pay premium prices
- **Certification:** The certification process demands time, effort, and financial investment. Accreditation costs and the meticulous record-keeping, research, and monitoring requirement may deter potential organic growers. The accreditation inspections can be supportive, but require the olive grower to take time in building personal relationships - which can bring help from the Certifying Body in understanding what is allowable in solving (for instance) a trace element deficiency.
- **Pest and Disease Management:** Controlling outbreaks of pests and diseases can be more challenging in organic farming. Without the aid of synthetic pesticides, organic growers must employ alternative strategies, which can be time-consuming and require sustained determination (see “Robust Healthy Trees” above)
- **Potential for Lower Yields:** Allocating the same budget to organic farming may result in lower yields compared to non-organic methods.

## Nitrogen Challenge:

There is a significant challenge for an olive grower who wants to be certified as organic, if he or she has been applying soluble fertilizer (especially nitrogen) through irrigation - so-called “fertigation”. He or she not only has to stop using soluble fertilizer; he or she has to build a new process - probably based on chicken manure applied once or twice a year - which requires the soil biome to store the nutrients and release them when required. And he or she has to create the soil biome essentially from scratch - because the soluble fertiliser will have killed off the parts of the biome which store nutrients because there was nothing for them to do!

The olive grower may want to consider a number of actions which can help the problem - including applying a “package” of soil bacteria (e.g. Bactivate) or sowing sub. clover in the grove.

## Soil and Leaf Analyses:

As an organic grower wrestles with solving nutrition deficits (See “Robust Healthy Trees” above) Soil and Leaf analyses provide vital information. There may however be situations where a soil analysis may show a deficit, but the leaf analysis shows the tree is quite happy -and doesn’t really need additional nutrient. This can be a result of the soil biome being much better at accessing a nutrient than the rather simple “chemistry kit which is used in a soil analysis

*[One aspect of organic olive farming is the management of nitrogen, a vital nutrient for tree growth. Liquid nitrogen applied through irrigation is efficient and can be done often and a little at the time. Liquid organic fertilizer high in nitrogen is 6 times the cost. Spreading chicken manure, which is high nitrogen, will take more time to apply and will take a year to break down, so needs planning in advance.]*

## Becoming a certified organic grower is a process:

1. Choose a certifying body.
2. Select the type of certification.
3. Complete an Organic Management Plan and application.

The certification process can take 1-3 years for producers, dependent on past chemical usage, while processors typically achieve certification status in less than three months. Subsequent annual audits and soil testing ensure ongoing adherence to organic standards.

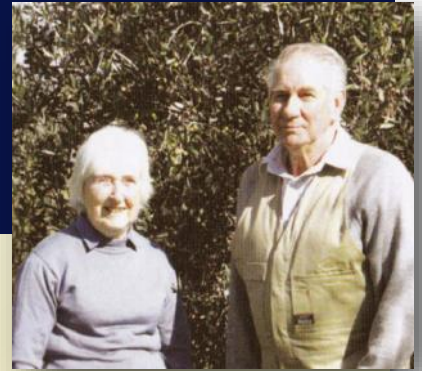
## Is it worth it?

While the financial considerations of organic olive growing may pose challenges, the long-term benefits to the environment, consumer satisfaction, and the overall health of the ecosystem make it a compelling option.

*Marjan Symington with edits from Andrew Laing*



La Grue  
OLIVES



A member of GSOGA observed quietly, several days ago, that little was “public” about Peter and Ruth’s olive growing farm at Gruyere (Yarra Valley) although the owners have been members of GSOGA for some time. Ruth and Peter are both quite old and now have to change life-style to “retired” after developing and working La Grue for 45 years.

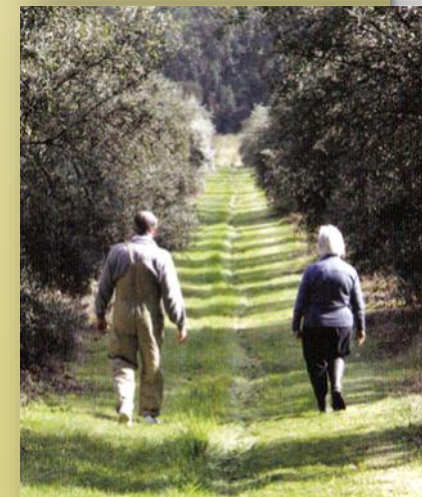
The property is 14 acres, 50 km from GPO Melbourne, south of the Great Dividing Range. It comprises a solid brick-veneer home plus farm sheds and other improvements including a professionally installed irrigation system for all the orchard. Irrigation water is supplied from a valley catchment which is close to the head-waters of Stringybark Creek which runs into the Yarra River upstream of Coldstream. Four acres of the farm are covered in virgin Yarra Valley bushland. To ensure the irrigation water supply, a valley dam catches water which is then pumped by a submersible solar powered pump to a header dam for reticulation to the olive trees.



We installed the DIY solar pumping system. The story is on our website.

<https://www.lagruelives.com.au/>

*Peter Jeffery*



## Goulburn Strathbogie Olive Growers Association Committee

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