



# The Frantoio Press

October 2009

## On Orchard.

The flower buds are clearly showing now. A few days of warm weather and warmer nights will see the first flowers opening. It is important to keep boron levels up and maintain applications at about 3-weekly intervals until 4 weeks after fruit set.

Boron promotes flower viability and strong early cell division, which will give your crop a good start.

If you did a good pruning job this winter spray penetration should not be a problem.

Only one more spray is required prior to harvest: a copper not later than mid-February to protect the summer flush against peacock spot.

Peacock spot tends to creep up from the bottom of the tree where drying is the slowest and splash throws up spores from the ground. It is therefore important to ensure good coverage of the bottom half of the tree; the tops dry out quickly and are less vulnerable.



Orchard after pruning

From your soil test (if you collected one) you know which nutrients you need to apply if you haven't already done so.

My experience has taught me to go easy on nitrogen. The trees respond too well to a generous application and reward you with lots of growth that will keep you in a job over summer!

Mowing, weed control and summer pruning are the other main activities until harvest.

## Girdling

Early this year I girdled (ringbarked) every second row of the varieties I felt confident of they would give a positive response.

Now flower buds are out the difference is clearly visible. I noticed however that the non-girdled trees are also having reasonable bud numbers. That could of course be the effect of the colder winter.

I like to think that the girdling in the past have slowed the trees down enough to have a somewhat ongoing effect.

I will keep an eye on it. Too much girdling will of course lead to the tree dying. On the other hand letting it go unchecked may not produce heavy crops.

The Bay of Plenty is too generous to the trees and they require a controlled amount of stress to switch them into flower production rather than vegetative growth.

It remains an unproven practice and caution is needed. Killing trees is the last thing I want, but on the other side I do not want to grow trees just for the foliage either!

## Going Organic

My orchard is now entering into its last year of organic conversion. The main effort goes into weed control. I mow the blocks alternatively lengthwise and across. Spraying is not really an issue as I only use 2 coppers per year. I have applied 1 ton per ha of Roksolid from Agrissentials. Boron

levels are good and can be maintained by a side dressing of Ulexite (boronate 36) which has a fast and a slow release component and is available as an organic fertilizer.

The 2011 crop will be a certified organic one. The certification also applies to the millhouse.

Hopefully this will open new market opportunities.

### **Oil Sales**

Oil sales are progressing steadily.

On Fridays I start with the Katikati market.

Saturdays I attend the monthly markets in Morrinsville and Tamahere with Tauranga on the Saturdays in between.

On Sunday you will find me at the Mount Maunganui market, occasionally giving it a miss for a special event elsewhere. That market is developing into a deli food market and has a great atmosphere.

So far six specialist retailers are now stocking the “Viridis grove” extra virgin olive oil.

I have also started to produce infused oils. So far I have been selling lemon and basil infused olive oils and a lime infused avocado oil. All three are popular.

I am now in the process of producing chili infused avocado oil and garlic infused olive oil to complete the package.

The size range of bottles is now 100, 250 and 500 ml. The 100 ml bottles are of clear glass. The bottles with not infused oils are wrapped in gold or green foil to protect the oil from the light and to have an attractive presentation.

### **Olives New Zealand**

ONZ has had their annual conference, and a new committee has been elected. However I do not believe the internal disagreements in the industry have been resolved.

The drive by ONZ is focused on the introduction of an industry levy. This will raise their current income from membership

subscriptions (about \$50.000 pa.) to about \$175.000 pa.

The argument is that more funding is required for research and marketing etc.

I have the distinct impression that the bigger producers have an agenda that will them see take control of the market, in particular the export market.

One of the comments that appeared in the ONZ newsletter was that the levy is needed to assist the export efforts of the larger producers who are trying to develop export markets.

My question is whether there is money available to anyone who wants to start exporting olive oil.

I did not renew my membership and have told ONZ that I will reconsider once I can see that the rift in the industry is mended.

### **Website**

I let my website slip from my radar over the last year. I am now in the process to overhaul it by adding new and more interesting information.

I would also like to encourage mail orders in the future.



**This is a Katikati Frantoio Limited publication.** For further information please contact Bert van Heuckelum, 117 Lindemann Road, RD1 Katikati, tel . 07-549 1467, email [heuck@clear.net.nz](mailto:heuck@clear.net.nz)

**Disclaimer:** Katikati Frantoio Limited (KFL) makes no warranty or representation as to the accuracy or completeness of the information, photographs or other content in this publication. The published material may be subject to copyright and shall not be reproduced in any matter without first obtaining the written consent of KFL. KFL shall not be liable to any person for loss, injury or damages arising from that person's reliance on the published material. ©2007 Katikati Frantoio Limited.