

Juno Olives



On a warm, dizzily, spring morning in October 2001 Karen and Ian Juno commenced planting 1280 olive trees sourced from Italy, Spain, France and Greece. Their plan was to eventually plant 2000 trees and produce high quality extra virgin olive oil.

Using a chemical-free philosophy, they avoided herbicide and pesticide, and cleared deep-rooted rye grass from their stony riverbed soil by “grass grubbing” an area where each tree would be planted. An auger was used to drill metre deep holes into the stony soil. The auger was an attempt to avoid too many subsurface rocks being brought to the surface. Nonetheless rocks emerged and have since been used elsewhere in stone walls and garden edgings around the property.

Since 2001, a further 300 Koroneiki have been planted, along with a variety of fruit and nut trees, citrus, avocados, and tamarillos. There is also a large vegetable garden and five acres set aside for a small vineyard.

Juno Olives is set on 17 acres of free-draining soil situated on the Tauherenikau plains. The grove has panoramic views overlooking the

rugged Tararua ranges, and is three minutes from historic Greytown and a one hour drive from Wellington, New Zealand’s capital city.

In the neighbouring vicinity to Karen and Ian’s grove there are another six growers adding a total of over 10,000 olive trees that span a mile along “their” stretch of the state highway. They have unofficially named this stretch the “Green Gold Mile” because it reflects the consistent award-winning reputation for extra virgin olive oil being produced the area.

In 2006 Juno Olives produced a small quantity of extra virgin olive oil with characteristic herbaceous, grassy intensity that finished with an appealing pepperiness on the back of the palette. The oil was a rich green colour so common to the oil producing areas of the Mediterranean. The oil sold quickly with buyers complimenting its quality. The 2007 harvest looks set to produce another quality year as the trees continue to mature and the harvest increases.

Sales of Juno Olives extra virgin olive oil, pickles and chutneys can be obtained direct at the gate or by mail order. Visits to Juno Olives are by appointment. ●