**Growing Olives in Oregon**

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Olives (*Olea europaea)* are a perennial evergreen tree species that can live for hundreds of years. Originating in the Middle East and Mediterranean regions, they are typically grown in areas with a Mediterranean climate (long, hot summers and cool, mild winters).

**Crop Information-** Olives have been grown as a commercial crop in Oregon for over 10 years by growers located in the Willamette Valley, west of the Cascades.

* A survey of growers reveals that 41 cultivars are currently grown in Oregon
* Most common cultivars are Arbequina, Frantoio, Leccino and Pendolino

**Growing Information -**Olives have shallow roots with rooting depths of 3-4 feet, may have vigorous growth depending on the planting density, cultivar, and climate, and are drought resistant.

Most cultivars are not very cold tolerant, and may be damaged by temperatures dropping to 15° F, and killed at 10° F or below.

Plant in full sun, if possible on a south or west exposure

Olive trees can eventually get big – give them 10-20’ spacing

Native growing areas of olives have calcareous soils which have a higher pH with better drainage than our native soils in western Oregon. Adding lime may be necessary.

Olives have been grown historically with no or low inputs, but ensuring adequate irrigation and fertilization may improve survival, growth and yields.

Olives currently have few pests in Oregon. However, those you may encounter include:

* Scale
* Peacock spot (*Spilocacea oleaginea*)
* Vertebrates such as voles or deer

Olives require 3-5 weeks of chilling (temperatures below 55°) in order to bloom, and bear flowers on the basal nodes of one-year-old shoots.

They are wind pollinated, and most cultivars require the presence of a pollinizer tree due to self-incompatibility (if you desire fruit).

In this region it will take 5-7 years for trees to produce fruit, which will not fully ripen in Oregon due to a shorter growing season.

Olives will need to be brined to be edible, as a home grower you will not produce enough olives for oil.