

2024 Grove Census Harvest Data Report

Introduction

Olives New Zealand is most appreciative to all members who completed and returned their 2024 Grove Census forms, even when this was to report “No Harvest”. The data in this report is shared with national and international organizations and researchers, making it crucial for the information to be as comprehensive as possible to provide an accurate snapshot of the industry. The individual benefits for grove owners, including performance monitoring and benchmarking regionally and nationally, are significant. Despite a response rate of only 45%, similar to last year, this data remains vital.

Olives New Zealand estimates there are approximately 310,000 olive trees in groves across the country, with 161,000 owned by members. The 2024 harvest year saw variability for many groves, with 343 tonnes of olives harvested by members—50 tonnes less than last year and the lowest total since 2015. However, higher yields resulted in 97,197 litres of NZ EVOO certified in 2024 from 137 oils, compared to 76,982 litres from 142 oils in 2023.

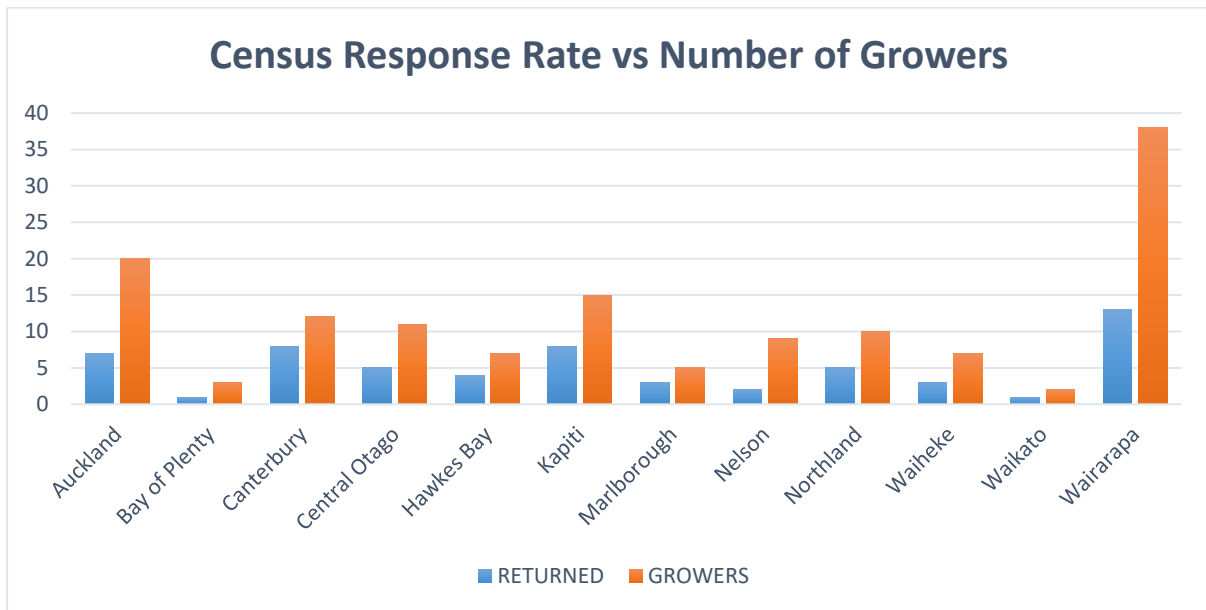
About 28% of groves reported “No Harvest,” consistent with 2023. It is assumed that many non-respondents also had no harvest. The primary reasons for no harvest included weather issues during flowering/fruit set, drought or early autumn frosts, regeneration or heavy pruning, tree disease, and bird damage.

The following report analyses the harvest and yield data by region and variety, comparing them across different seasons.

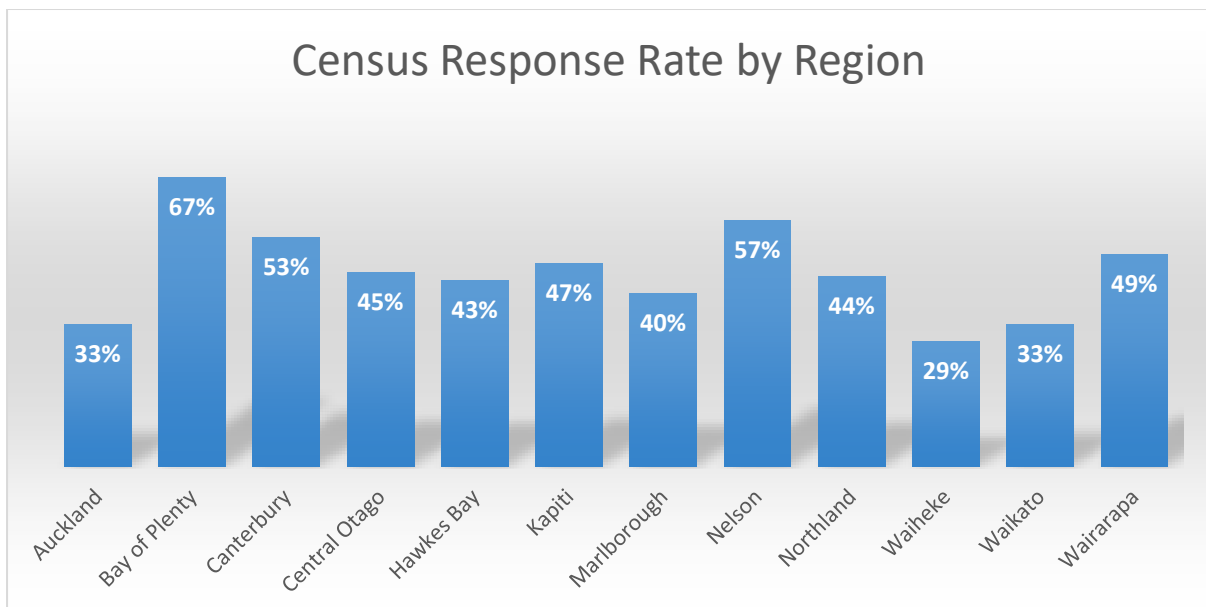
Responses by Region

The response rate for the 2024 harvest census was 45% (64 out of 141 groves), similar to the rate in 2023 but lower than the 72% returned 2022. Kapiti and Canterbury had the highest return rates among growers.

The response rate vs number of groves in the regions is shown on the following chart.

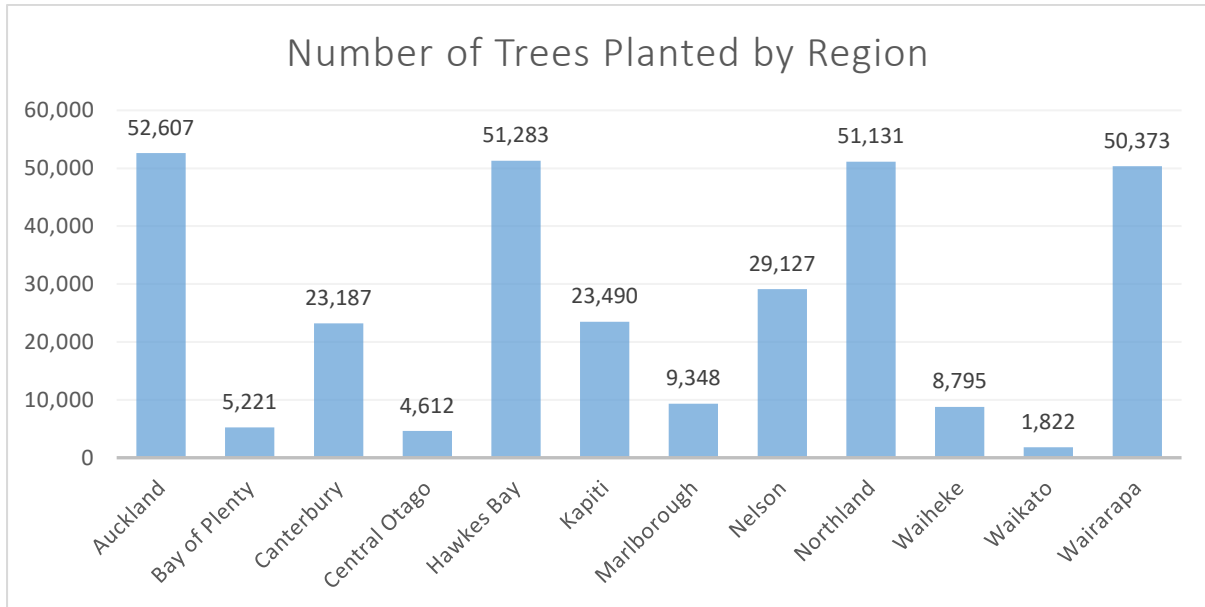


The response rate by members in the region is shown on the following chart.



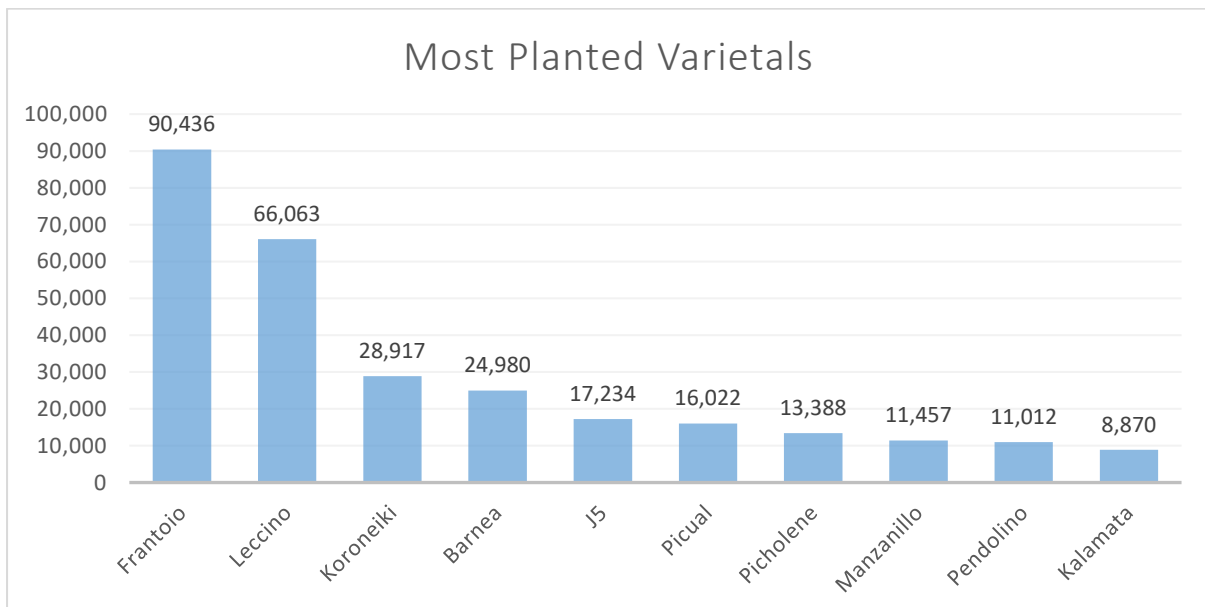
Trees Planted by Region

There are approximately 310,000 olive trees recorded in the database. Auckland, Hawke’s Bay, Northland, and Wairarapa each claim over 50,000 trees. Kapiti, Canterbury, and Nelson have between 20,000 and 30,000 trees each. The remaining regions account for fewer than 10,000 trees per region.



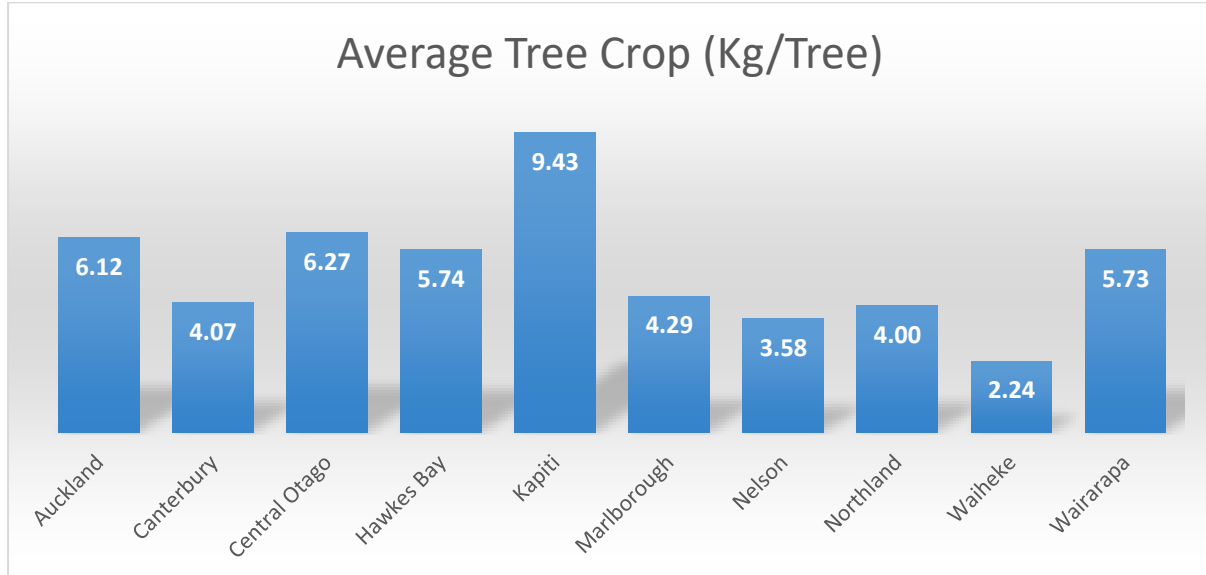
Most Planted Varietals

Frantoio is the most planted varietal across the country, followed by Leccino. The following chart shows the ten most planted varietals.



Crop by Region

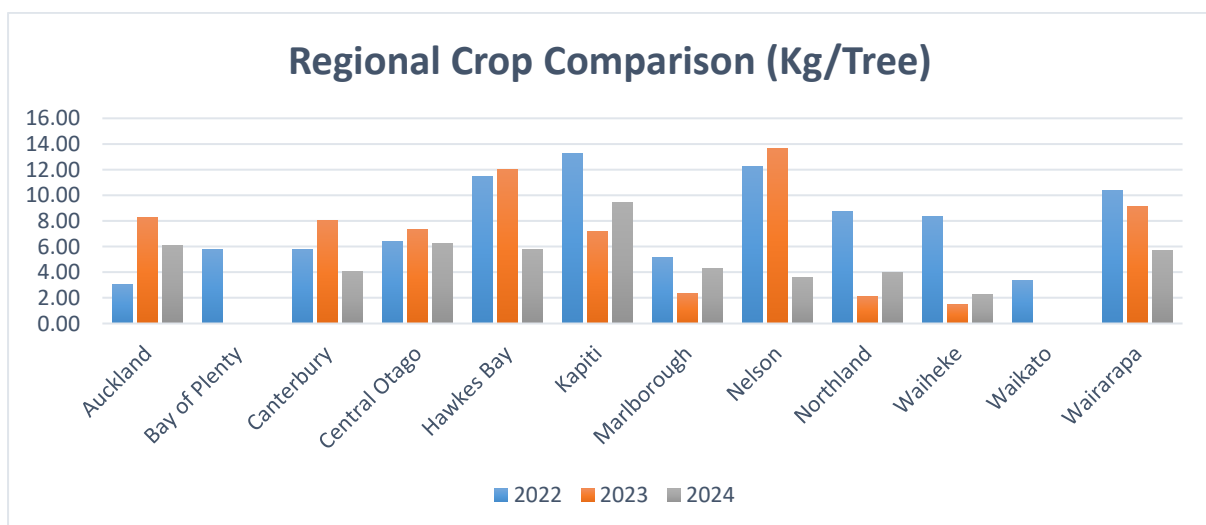
The 2024 harvest saw significant variation across the growing regions. Kapiti emerged as the top-performing region, closely followed by Central Otago. The national average yield was 5.1kg per tree, a significant decrease from 9.2kg per tree in 2023.



This report includes all trees recorded by census respondents, regardless of whether they were harvested. The lower average crop per tree in 2024 is reflective of the drought conditions in the Wairarapa, Canterbury, and Marlborough regions, as well as early frosts in parts of Canterbury, Nelson, Wairarapa, and Central Otago, which resulted in no harvests for entire groves or certain varieties.

Average Crop 2022 - 2024

The average crop harvested was lower compared to previous years for most regions that consistently participate in the Harvest Census.



Top Individual Crop by Region

Best cropping variety across regions in 2024 has been variable as in the past.

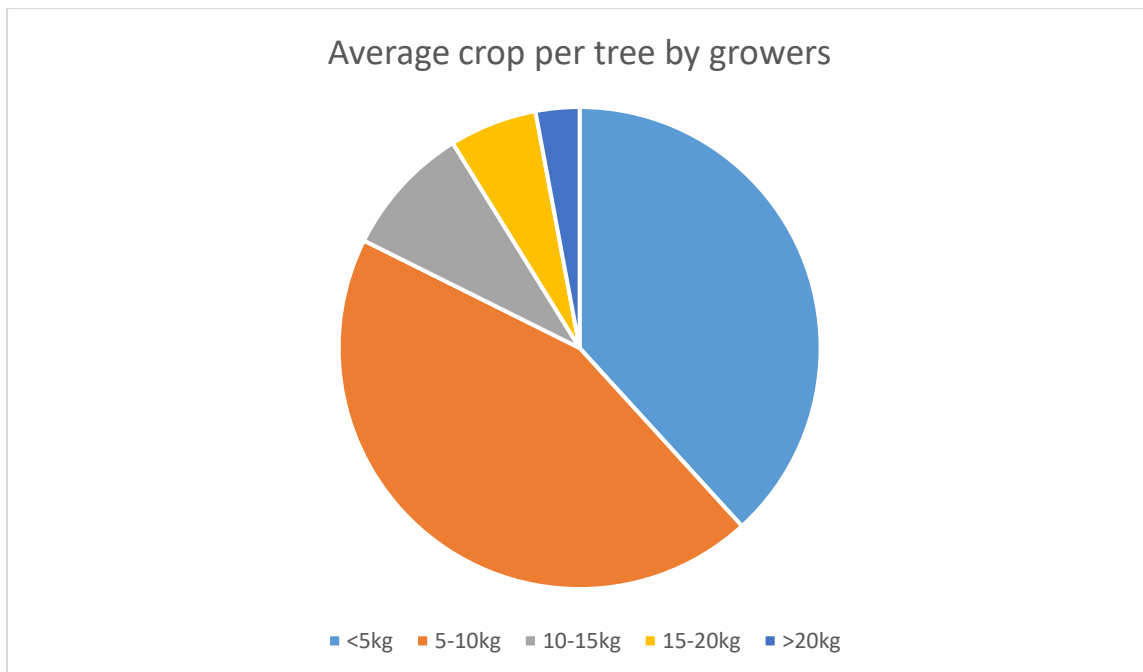
Region	2022		2023		2024	
	Variety	Kgs	Variety	Kgs	Variety	Kgs
Auckland	J5	12.50	Frantoio	10.00	J5	12.35
Bay of Plenty	Leccino	7.87				
Canterbury	Picholene	16.92	Leccino	19.02	Minerva	9.72
Central Otago	Leccino	11.82	Frantoio	14.92	Frantoio	7.06
Hawkes Bay	Picual	33.37	Picual	31.71	Koroneiki	9.12
Kapiti	Leccino	25.78	Leccino	21.10	Frantoio	22.00
Marlborough	Koroneiki	13.45	Leccino	3.93	Leccino	7.14
Nelson	Mission (California)	40.00	Picholene	23.62	Minerva	9.23
Northland	Frantoio	10.41	Frantoio	4.37	Frantoio	6.92
Waiheke	J5	25.35	Picual	2.08	Frantoio	21.16
Waikato	Picual	3.39				
Wairarapa	Picholene	31.18	Moraiolo	40.00	Picholene	28.74

Where no individual varietal figures are available this is shown as blank. This is typically because smaller groves tend to harvest all varieties together.

Crop by Grove

Harvest figures have decreased compared to last year, with over 80% of groves producing less than 10kg per tree on average. Similarly to 2023, 27 groves reported no harvest. Given the disappointing census response rate, it is likely that many non-respondents also experienced no harvest.

The 2024 grove harvest figures are shown below and do not include the No Harvest groves, but all trees for those that did harvest.



Organic Groves

Only four groves are formally registered as organic or similar, each following its own management principles. Due to the limited number of registered organic groves, there isn't enough data for detailed reporting.

Spray Programmes

About 28 groves (46% of those that harvested) operate with a spray programs. The primary diseases targeted are Peacock Spot and Anthracnose. Manzate or Mancozeb remain the most commonly used sprays for their effectiveness, along with Protek during budding and flowering. There is a growing use of organic sprays, including Copper, Biosea, Enspray 99, and Serenade.

Irrigation

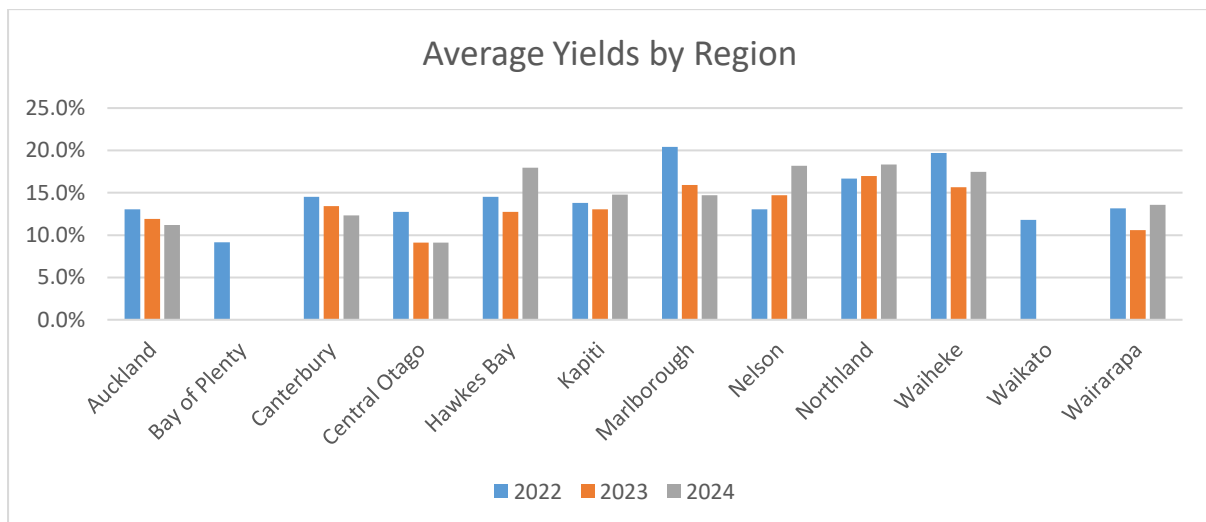
About 26% of groves are registered as irrigated. Many groves undertook repairs and maintenance on their irrigation systems during the 2024 season.

Table Olive Production

In 2024, table olive production totalled 3.58 tonnes, up from 2.76 tonnes in 2023. Hawke’s Bay led in production, with Wairarapa, Waiheke Island, and Canterbury also producing significant quantities.

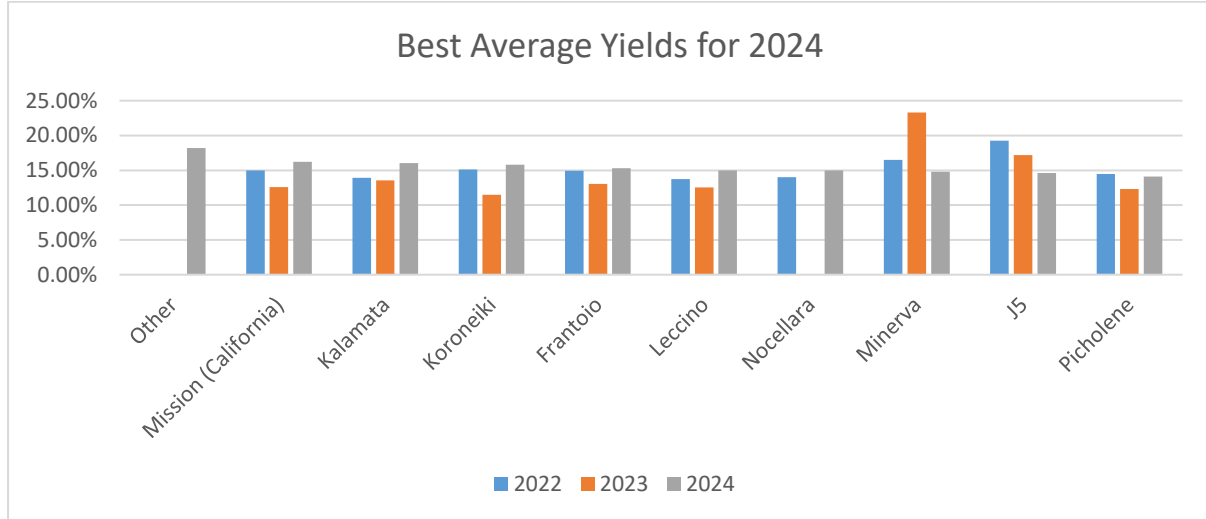
Average Oil Yield by Region

The oil yield percentage in 2024 varied across regions. Hawke’s Bay, Nelson, Waiheke Island, and Wairarapa saw significant increases compared to 2023, while yields in Canterbury and Marlborough were notably lower. Excluding Bay of Plenty and Waikato, the national average yield was 14.8%, up from 13.4% in 2023 and 14.6% in 2022.



Best Average Yield by Variety

The majority of oil yields in 2024 increased compared to 2023 and 2022, except for Minerva and J5. The highest average single varietal yield was Mission at 16.2% followed by Kalamata at 16%, the reminding average yields were less than 15.5%.

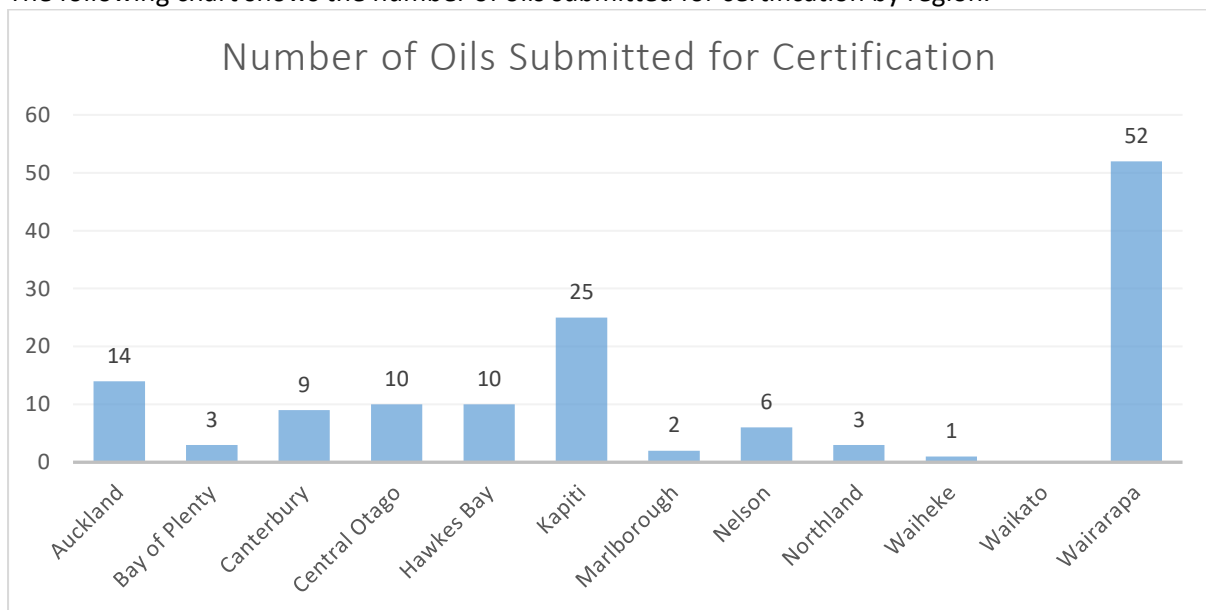


Certification Summary Data

The 2024 certification saw 137 oils submitted with every oil meeting the Certification standard.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Total EVOO	137	142	191	214	194	179	182	123	213	119	159
Total Litres	97,197	75,566	109,760	136,044	106,278	125,985	152,500	86,078	201,000	76,000	120,109

The following chart shows the number of oils submitted for certification by region.



The overall range and average for all certification measures in 2024 as follows.

2024 EVOO CERTIFICATION DATA SUMMARY

CHEMICAL ASSESSMENT	Lowest	Highest	Median	Average
Free Fatty Acid	0.01	0.35	0.14	0.14
Peroxide Value	0.40	9.50	4.00	4.04
Polyphenol Content	94	918	265	305
UV Absorption				
Delta K	< 0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01
232 Nm	1.11	12.84	1.53	1.62
268 Nm	0.09	0.36	0.12	0.13
SENSORY/ORGANOLEPTIC				
Fruity	3.50	5.50	5.00	4.96
Bitter	2.00	4.80	3.50	3.55
Pungent	2.00	4.50	3.50	3.48

The intensity spread, based on Polyphenols for 2024, ranged from 94 to a record 918. The total percentages were 38% Intense, 60% Medium and 2% Mild. Although Wairarapa had the highest polyphenol result, Canterbury had the highest average with 481 and Bay of Plenty the lowest average with 148.

Although all tested oil samples were certified as EVOO, the 2024 NZ EVOO Awards highlighted a general decline in balance, flavours, and complexity, with fewer gold and more bronze awards given.

Summary

Many growers had high hopes for a better season in 2024, but the results in this report will not be surprising to most. The impacts of climate and environmental factors on the groves has been reflected the fruit volumes, oil yields and polyphenol counts.

Growers who have worked hard to recover their groves from previous wetter years have generally seen quicker recovery. Meanwhile, others faced challenges such as drought, frosts, and bird damage. Those with access to irrigation in drier regions benefited from its use. Hawke’s Bay, Nelson, Northland, and Waiheke Island all reported average regional yields over 17.5%.

Reports of heavy flowering and fruit set offer a positive outlook for the 2025 harvest. We eagerly await what the upcoming season will bring.

It is noted that with low response rate it is hard to make accurate analysis.

Olives New Zealand thanks the growers who returned their 2024 harvest data.