

## Olive Planting

Just like any tree, there's more than one way to plant an olive. Over our past 7 years of planting, growing and researching about olive trees we have observed and tested many such methods. With these trials and research in mind we have concluded that there is an optimum way to plant olive trees for maximum results. Our customers have tried many methods, over the years, with varying degrees of success. However, one thing that has been clearly displayed is that fully irrigated trees planted in good climates and soils according to the steps below, grow approximately one yard per year in both height and breadth, in their early years. This is faster than any other natural methods we have seen.

So here they are - the steps for planting a healthy, fast growing olive orchard. You don't have to follow these steps but if you do, the long term results will generally please you.

1. Roughly spread 2.5 to 3 cubic ft. of well rotted animal manure at each tree site. (9 trees per cubic yard). Most animal manures are suitable as long as they are not too fresh. Spread the manure over an area of 9 ft X 9 ft , so that it's not concentrated in one place.
2. Also spread at up to 5 lbs per tree of trace mineral such as Azomite (sometime called rock dust) at each tree site (contains excellent minerals which are not water soluble and are naturally available to the tree roots as required). Also spread this over the 9 ft x 9 ft area. Azomite can be obtained from Peaceful Valley Farm Supply, PO Box 2209 Grass Valley, CA 95945, 888-784-172. Source in Florida: Dana Venrick - danavenrick@yahoo.com - (386) 837-3878
3. If your soil requires the addition of lime to bring it's pH level to 7.0-8.0 (alkaline), then add the required amount to the manure and trace minerals. Contact your local Department of Agriculture or fertilizer company if you need pH testing done and lime quantities worked out.
4. Deep rip several times along the full length of the planting row to a depth of 2 ft or more and a width of at least 10 ft. The

nutrients will be suitably mixed in as they drop down the ripper grooves. You will end up with ten to twelve deep rips spread across the 10 ft width of the row. This preparation will give the roots an excellent start and fast growth will result. You may wish to then level the ripped area with a blade, rotary hoe or similar.

5. Plant the tree at the same depth as it was in the pot. Do not disturb the roots when removing the pot. (NB. It is a good idea to place your irrigation system between steps 4 and 5.)
6. Press soil down firmly around the tree roots and make a depression to act as a watering basin.
7. Water thoroughly and mulch with coarse straw to conserve water, cool the soil, and reduce weed growth. The best mulches to use are those that contain plenty of nitrogen and other nutrients to feed the tree. These include lucerne, soya bean and pea hay. Keep the mulch 4"-6" away from the base of the trunk to allow the tree to breathe. As the mulch decomposes over a period of time the nutrients are transferred into the soil by earthworms, rain and micro-organisms. If using mulch, try to buy spoiled (rain damaged) bales, which are often available for just one or two dollars.

(NB. If you are planting in an area with relatively long, cold, wet winters and short warm summers, only mulch very lightly or not at all. Too much mulch will conserve too much water.)

8. Continue your irrigation according to our Irrigation sheet and general common sense. Be careful not to waterlog as excess water is the olive tree's worst enemy.

NB. All trees from Santa Cruz Olive Tree Nursery are 'container grown' and hardened and can be planted in moderate climates (winters that don't go below 25 deg F) at any time of the year. Very young trees may need protection from severe frost and animals. Further advice on these situations is readily available on this site or from Santa Cruz Olive Tree Nursery.