

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Pest Management in the Olive Industry

Associate Professor Robert Spooner-Hart of the School of Science and Health is being supported by the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation (RIRDC) and industry partner, the Australian Olive Association, to investigate chemical options for the management of pests in the olive industry. Dr Len Tesoriero of NSW Department of Primary Industries is collaborating on this project.

'Pests and diseases can, if not effectively controlled, make olive production unviable,' says Associate Professor Spooner-Hart. 'The Australian industry has, with limited chemical control options available to deal with the important problems of olive lace bug and anthracnose/fruit rots. However, there are no available data on the potential for presence of residues of these controls in olive fruit or oil. It is essential that we understand this so that effective withholding periods for these products can be established. In this project we aim to generate this residue data which will allow the registration and use of new chemical products consistent with olive's healthy image, be safe to beneficial insect species and lead to significant environmental benefits.'

This research involves conducting field trials with recently identified superior plant protection products in a number of Australian locations. The trials will include sampling of fruit using two distinctly different sites over a period of two years. This will involve a minimum of four trials for each product followed by the analysis of the fruit and oil samples in an accredited laboratory and interpretation of the analysis data. The field trials will be conducted on commercial olive groves to ensure data is relevant in practical situations. In addition, a series of laboratory bioassays will be conducted to support the field-generated data.



The results of this research will support the continuation of an economically and environmentally sustainable Australian olive industry. It will help the industry meet the expectations of consumers for the safe and effective use of pesticides and minimise problems associated with their residues in olive products, enhancing the "clean and green" image of olive production, not only within Australia, but also internationally.

Project Title: Residue data for key chemicals in the Australian olive industry

Funding has been set at: \$199,900

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