



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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For immediate release

### **Goedgedacht blessed with record olive oil harvest of 27 000 litres**

Nestled at the foot of Kasteelberg near Riebeek-Kasteel, Goedgedacht Trust's small olive farm is making a significant impact. For three decades, Goedgedacht has been farming with hope and impact, striving to uplift rural communities in the Swartland region. This year, the farm celebrated a record-breaking olive harvest.



According to Pieter Brand, Goedgedacht's farm manager, their 2024 harvest yielded 150 tonnes of olives, marking their second-largest harvest ever and the highest average yield per block at 17%. This resulted in a record production of 27 000 litres of cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil. The farm covers 164,5 hectares, with 36 ha dedicated to olive trees, mainly Frantoio and Mission cultivars. In April, a team of 90 seasonal workers completed the olive harvest within a month using hand rakes and nets.

### **Regenerative agriculture boosts olive production**

Goedgedacht is in its fourth year of regenerative farming, which has significantly enhanced their olive groves. "Our trees perform better, are more resilient to heat stress, and we have fewer pest problems," says Brand. "Our olive quality has improved, and our yields consistently surpass those from our previous conventional farming methods."

Previously, Goedgedacht's average harvest was 72 tonnes, but this year's 150 tonnes bring them closer to their peak of 185 tonnes in 2022. Olive oil production increased from 25 000 litres in 2022 to 27 000 litres this year. Brand notes that while harvest yields vary by region, 10 tonnes per hectare is a good average.

"Where we previously harvested two to three tonnes of olives per hectare, we now achieve five to seven tonnes," says Brand. "Some producers harvest 12 to 15 tonnes, so we see significant growth

potential. Our 17% average yield per block is an improvement from our previous 14 to 15%, with some blocks reaching up to 22%. We're aiming for 18 to 25% in the future.”

Goedgedacht has also introduced new olive cultivars such as Koroneiki and Arbequina, known for their smaller trees and high oil content. The farm uses mulching with cardboard, straw, and old olive pulp to boost soil health, increase humus content, and retain moisture. Dexter cows, Loman chickens, and flocks of guinea fowl also contribute to the farm's regenerative practices. Additionally, the olive groves serve as a training ground for community members, teaching them specialised skills like olive tree pruning.

### **Willow Creek showcases Goedgedacht's premium olive oil**

Olives were first pressed at Goedgedacht in 1998, but since 2022, Willow Creek Olive Estate has taken over pressing, certification, and sales, distributing the oil to both South African and international markets.

Eleanor Stoker, CEO of Willow Creek, praises Goedgedacht's regenerative agriculture practice. "The results are remarkable, from the abundance of fruit to the impressive volume produced," says Stoker. "That's why we decided to press Goedgedacht's olives separately from other small producers, offering their premium extra-virgin olive oil under the Willow Creek brand."

### **Join the Goedgedacht family: Sponsor an olive tree**

The olive trees on Goedgedacht, which can live for thousands of years, symbolise the farm's sustainable impact on the Swartland community. Anyone can contribute, like Nobel Prize winner Desmond Tutu, who sponsored a tree in the Goedgedacht Olive Peace Grove. For R700, sponsors receive a personalised plaque on the memorial wall and an invitation to visit the farm. Learn more at <https://www.goedgedacht.org/donate-dedicate-an-olive-tree/>.

### **Support sustainable community solutions**

Farming and hospitality activities are crucial to funding Goedgedacht Trust's development work. Their flagship *Path Onto Prosperity* (POP) programme supports children from birth and their first 1000 days through early adulthood (22 years). Goedgedacht operates six POP centres, in Riebeek Kasteel/Esterhof (since 2010), Riebeek-Wes (since 2012), Koringberg, Chatsworth and Riverlands (since 2015), as well as in Porterville (since 2018).

Deon Snyman, managing director of the Trust, emphasises their mission to helping children become healthy, confident, educated, and skilled community members. “Donors assist us in empowering underprivileged communities through early childhood development, grade R classes, holiday programmes, parent training, family support groups, our Care for the Planet initiatives, as well as our olive grove.”

A limited quantity of olive oil can be bought directly from the farm. For more information on fundraising, events, or accommodation at Goedgedacht, contact Nadia Samuels-Zwaan at +27 (0) 74 925 177 or [fundraising@goedgedacht.org](mailto:fundraising@goedgedacht.org). Visit <https://www.goedgedacht.org/> and follow @GoedgedachtTrust on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

### **Social media:**

<https://www.facebook.com/GoedgedachtTrust>

[https://www.instagram.com/goedgedacht\\_trust/](https://www.instagram.com/goedgedacht_trust/)

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/goedgedacht-trust/>

**ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE GOEDGEDACHT TRUST**

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**Photo Captions:**

1. Goedgedacht Trust, a small olive farm, is making a big impact in the rural communities of the Swartland. This year, the farm celebrated a record olive harvest.
2. Goedgedacht dedicates 36 hectares to olive trees, primarily Frantoio and Mission cultivars, with new additions like Koroneiki and Arbequina cultivars. Pictured is Cobed Swartz in the olive grove, where training in olive tree pruning is provided.
3. Sponsor a tree in the Goedgedacht Olive Peace Grove: You'll receive a personalised plaque on the memorial wall, an invitation to visit the farm, and the knowledge of contributing to the Swartland community.
4. The Goedgedacht Trust honours Tim Jackson, their biggest individual donor to date. Jackson, who passed away in July 2024, assisted Goedgedacht in fundraising and donated 10 hectares of olive trees, known as the 'Jackson Olives,' to the Swartland community.
5. Goedgedacht's proud olive-growing team: from left, Cobed Swartz, general worker; Jonnothan Meloy, farm foreman; and Pieter Brand, farm manager.
6. This year, several students from various schools in the United Kingdom visited the Goedgedacht Trust in the Swartland, focusing on local sports and community development.

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