

Hard work pays off for olive oil producers

Local company Hihi Olives, owned by Lynette and Colin Wilson, has received three silver medals in the New Zealand Olive Oil Awards held in Wellington in October.

First Drop, the flagship brand owned by four Far North olive producers, also received three silver medals at the awards.

The brand First Drop is produced by marketing company, New Zealand Olive Growers & Exporters, which was formed by Kerikeri Olive Estate (Vivienne Mitchell and Ivan Lipanovic), Hihi Olive Estate (Lynette and Colin Wilson), Te Reke Olives at Te Puna Inlet (Marilyn and Dick Jewell) and L'Olivetto, The Little Olive Grove, overlooking the Oruaiti River (Gillian and Vaughan Preece), for the purposes of export.

They say that apart from the obvious reason of being able to supply larger quantities of oil, combining their produce in this way has allowed them to guarantee consistency in quality.

According to First Drop's website the growers believe that the unique northern New Zealand coastal climate and soil types produces a truly exceptional extra virgin olive oil.

Masterchef, Paul Jobin was so impressed he crafted a Delicious New Parmesan Olive Oil using a secret blend of real parmesan cheese and herbs and spices, infused into the finest extra virgin olive oil from First Drop.



The result, a perfect drizzling oil for all those summer salads.

These oils are available locally from Saturday's Mangonui Market, The Far North Wine Centre, Mangonui and Coopers Beach Butchery or at Kerikeri's Sunday growers' market.

Check out their website www.firstdrop.co.nz

Lynette Wilson (Hihi Olives) and Gillian Preece (L'Olivetto) of New Zealand Olive Growers & Exporters with bottle of award winning First Drop extra virgin olive oil.