Olives (Olea europaea) have great potential as a landscape ornamental and may also provide opportunities for home fruit production. However, as a relatively new commercial crop to Florida, the cultural requirements of these trees are not completely known and research is ongoing to understand how to manage them for plant health and fruit yield as well as to make recommendations on varietal selections best suited to the southeastern region of the United States.

**Fertilizing**

Nutrient requirements for olive are low and the trees do not produce well on highly fertile soils. Olive is a rapidly growing plant and while growth increases are possible with supplemental nitrogen (N) fertilization, too much N will cause excessive vegetative (shoot) at the expense of reproductive growth (fruiting). Although nutrient deficiencies are uncommon, excessive N will negatively affect fruiting and oil quality. It is anticipated that management problems in Florida likely will involve excessive water and fertilization.

**Pruning**

Because flowering occurs on new growth emerging from the growth of the previous season, pruning can be tricky. Pruning is important in regulating flowering and may be used to shape the tree to assist with fruit harvest and will also improve air movement to reduce fungal disease. Olive trees will respond to radical pruning to control either height or plant form but the impacts on flowering and fruiting should be considered. The olive never bears fruit twice in the same place on a stem so new growth each year is essential to flower and fruit production the following year. Olive generally is described as an alternate-year-bearing species and thus fruiting is typically heavy every other year. In off years, pruning during flowering to remove non-flowering branches can increase fruit yield for home gardeners.