

# **Long Road Olive Co-operative Ltd**

## **Member Value Proposition document**



# Table of Contents

- Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd Member Value Proposition.....3
- Leveraging sales opportunities with the Long Road Olive Co-op.....3
- Matching your situation to the Co-op Member Value Proposition.....4
- About the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd.....5
- Co-operative Principles.....6
- Co-operative Values.....7
- Application for membership or for additional shares.....9

## Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd Member Value Proposition

Thanks for your interest in becoming a member of the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd. Please read this document in conjunction with the Co-op Rules and Disclosure statement to see if membership is right for you and your olive grove, whether that's one tree in your garden, or up to 3000 trees in your paddock. The Co-operative Rules document is the definitive document outlining requirements for applicants to maintain membership.

In order to provide value for the range of grower scales we anticipate from membership applications, we have a variety of co-operative membership benefits on offer at the Board's discretion, from which you can choose those relevant to your operations once membership fees have been paid. These may include and are not necessarily limited to:

- The first batch of processing of your own olives for oil (50-200kg) **OR** pickled for table fruit **OR** a combination (subject to total harvest size considerations and meeting minimum batch requirements for oil processing, 50kg). If you have your own label under which you are selling olive products, or only a small amount of trees/fruit, you can choose to keep the product(s) for your own needs, or the co-op can combine them with the bulk of the olives processed that season and market it under the co-operative brand; the Long Road Olive Co-op. There is no requirement to give up your own branding to be a co-op member; rather we offer the opportunity to leverage multiple sales outlets at any given time. More information on how this could work is outlined below.
- A 10% discount on co-op services and products. This includes additional processing batches in the same season, grove consulting and labour for pruning and harvesting, equipment hire, attendance at educational and social events, digital systems and templates etc. *Members are required to attend, host **or** facilitate/present at least one event per financial year in accordance with the co-op rules to maintain their membership.*
- Discounts on co-operative bulk purchase orders each month for a variety of household and farming inputs. These discounts will vary based on the products ordered. *Members are required to participate in at least one of the monthly bulk purchases per financial year in accordance with the co-op rules to maintain their membership.*
- Discounts on partner products and services for a range of household and farming inputs, if you choose to make use of these arrangements. *This is not a requirement to maintain membership, but helps support the co-op operational costs.* Such products and services could include banking services, fuel discounts, grocery discounts, utilities discounts etc by way of affiliate partnership agreements.

### Leveraging sales opportunities with the Long Road Olive Co-op for members who have their own brands

Assuming that the bulk of purchases of your olive products happen at Farmers' Markets, each producer can only be at one market on any given weekend. As a member of the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd, we can leverage the sales activities of multiple members in multiple locations to increase everyone's profits.

We do this by providing you with a small co-branding sticker to affix to your products, and we will carry your product range on our market stalls so that your brand is represented in multiple places on any given market day. This is a reciprocal arrangement, and we expect that you would also carry and promote some of the co-op branded products on your stall where you attend other markets. Where possible, we would aim to include co-op products different to what your current product range includes. For example if you only sell oil, we would expect you to carry the table olives and/or soap range from the co-op.

We can also arrange reciprocal website sales, social media promotions and so on to expand your brand reach.

## Matching your situation to the Co-op Member Value Proposition

We know that many small scale olive growers are not primary producers, or spend the bulk of their time working off-farm to support their rural lifestyle, while others with more trees under management may be struggling with their farm workloads. With this in mind, we have put together the following service packages which may be of assistance to you, wherever you fall on the farming continuum and no matter how many trees you manage.

1. **Guidance only:** For those who live on-site with their trees, and/or work full time on their farms, we can provide best practice grove management consulting advice and education *tailored to small scale enterprises* to increase the productivity of your grove. As a member, you receive a 10% discount on these services and products. This package works well for those who are keen to be involved with the day-to-day management of their grove, or have less than 100 trees, or have already established, or want to establish, their own brand of olive products and feel the need for some support to maximise the value of their grove.
2. **Done with you:** The Long Road Olive Co-op will share best practice grove management techniques, working alongside you as you expand your knowledge of olive growing. We can provide contract support for pruning, harvesting and processing through equipment and/or labour hire, so you don't need to manage the capital investment of purchasing additional equipment, or the HR requirements of employing staff. As a co-op member, you receive a 10% discount on these services and products. This package works well for groves of any size where the owner/manager is keen to be involved with grove activities but has limited time, or for growers keen to be involved with grove management who have purchased an already established brand of olive products along with their grove but have no previous olive growing experience and want to maximise the value of their trees.
3. **Done for you:** Let us take care of the hard work of grove management for you with a share cropping contract (minimum five year commitment to account for any regenerative pruning your grove may require). We will do all the labour required to increase your grove productivity, market the olive products under the co-op brand and share the profits with you in arrears for the previous financial year, after costs are deducted. Our standard agreement is 20% of profits go back to the grove owner, and 80% to the co-op. For example, if you enter into a share cropping agreement prior to April 1, 2026, we will prune, manage, harvest, process and sell your olives, keep 80% of the profits, and pay your share in March 2027 (once we've sold as much of the 2026 harvest produce as possible). This package works well for those who have at least 50 trees, appreciate that their grove can be an asset and additional income stream, but don't have time or ability to focus on grove management activities.
4. **Fruit purchasing:** The Long Road Olive Co-op will be purchasing additional fruit at a mutually agreeable price, from the 2026 harvest. Purchases of additional fruit will be prioritised from our members, however you don't have to be a member to sell fruit to the co-op. This arrangement requires that you do the harvesting, and meet the quality requirements of the co-op purchase agreement prior to payment. Purchase agreement prices will be individually set with growers depending on the variety of fruit, amount to be provided and quality of fruit. We recommend that you join the co-op to make use of the grower education opportunities, which will help to maximise your fruit quality and quantity through best practice grove management techniques.
5. **Garden growers:** If you have less than 25 trees under management, any or all of the packages outlined above may still be of use to you as a garden grower. The benefits of membership include our 10% discount on co-op services and products, connection with other olive growers through social and educational events, bulk purchasing discounts for compost and mulch for your garden, and individualised expert advice to help your tree(s) be the best they can. The co-op can provide support, assistance and templates for you to form a small grower group in your neighbourhood so that you can learn together and meet the minimum batch size requirement of 50kg of fruit for extra virgin olive oil processing if you would like to be the contact point for such a group. We also work closely with CERES' Olives to Oil program, and can facilitate your inclusion in that event if you don't know/have any other garden growers near you, and your council doesn't currently

participate in the Olives to Oil program. In addition and if you want to, garden grower members can support our larger co-op members by partnering to grow native trees for planting on groves through Tree Project, a not-for-profit organisation that brings together urban seedling raisers with farmers to increase biodiversity on farms. Given that there is a more stable supply of water in urban areas for seedling care, we can facilitate a one-to-one grower relationship between members, so that you can develop your own connection to the broader agricultural industry of which you are also a part.

## About the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd

The Long Road Olive Co-operative Ltd has been co-created over the last two years by a team of dedicated small scale growers who can see the benefits of working collaboratively to increase the productivity and profitability of small scale groves over time. Our Board consists of the following members and their experiences in the olive industry:

**Ceilidh Meo** – Managing Director – olive grower and processor with 17 years experience in business managing Apulia Grove Olives (2500 trees), graduate of the Governance Institute of Australia’s Effective Director Course, 2025 Victorian recipient of the AgriFutures Australia Rural Women’s Accelerator grant.

**Charles Meo** – Director – olive grower and processor with 17 years experience in business managing Apulia Grove Olives, over 30 years in IT contracting and consulting.

**Gabrielle Hughes** – Director – 8 years of project management experience, owner of two olive trees and passionate urban grower advocate.

**Jenni Montgomery** – Director – Olive grove owner with nine years experience, and four years experience in olive business management. More than 25 years experience in capacity development, health and safety communication, inclusion and diversity, quality assurance, events and knowledge management.

**Doug Scobie** – Director – Olive grove owner with nine years experience, and four years experience in olive business management. More than 20 years experience in finance, grants, HR, communications and engagement, compliance, strategic and operational decision-making.

**Glenn Atkins** – Director – Olive grove owner with 25 trees, extensive project management experience in mining, IT and agricultural industries.

Members can nominate to join the Board of Directors through the appropriate channels as outlined in the co-op Rules, at the Annual General Meeting each year. The first AGM for the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd will be held in September 2026, at the completion of our first financial year of operations.

The vision for the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd is to increase the productivity and profitability of small scale growers with between 1-3000 trees under management. Our mission is to provide high quality services and products to our members which support their farm viability while addressing environmental sustainability and biosecurity concerns posed by underutilised olive groves, and to provide our customers with high quality products which they can get excited about.

At this stage, the co-op is incorporated as a non-distributing co-op, so that we can apply for various grants to fund our start up activities without relying too heavily on the membership base for financial support. The Board is committed to increasing grower profitability over time by undertaking to pass a special resolution at a full member meeting to change from non-distributing to distributing registration at a time in the future when we actually have some profits to distribute. However there is no guarantee that such a time will be

reached, or that such a resolution would pass, and therefore we cannot promise future profit for your grove beyond the potential from a sharecropping contract or fruit/oil purchase agreement. The co-op may also, from time to time and once in a financial position to do so, offer paid work opportunities to members to assist with co-op commitments to community events, labour contracts etc; again, these cannot be considered a guaranteed source of income for yourself or your grove although we will certainly aim to share those opportunities equally amongst those who want to be involved.

## **Co-operative Principles**

A co-operative is a business model that is democratically designed and operated by the members, for the members. All co-operatives operate under the following principles:

### **1. Voluntary and Open Membership**

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

### **2. Democratic Member Control**

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

### **3. Member Economic Participation**

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

### **4. Autonomy and Independence**

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

### **5. Education, Training and Information**

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

### **6. Co-operation among Co-operatives**

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

### **7. Concern for Community**

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

## Co-operative Values

The Long Road Olive Co-op Board acknowledges that First Nations peoples have a deep connection to the land on which our members grow their olives, and that they have been caring for Country for tens of thousands of years. We pay respect to their connection with, and knowledge of, Country, and to their Elders (past, present and preparing) who continue to share this ancient wisdom.

In addition to the Co-operative Principles outlined on the previous page, there are a number of co-operative values that guide these principles: Equity, Self-Help, Self-Responsibility, Democracy, Solidarity and Equality. According to the North Country Co-operative Foundation, “These are the values on which the modern co-operative movement was founded and the basis for the organisation of every co-operative enterprise in the world today.”

1) Equity: This is the concept of providing disadvantaged folks and privileged people with fair accommodation and treatment according to their needs in order to put them on equivalent ground. For example, there are two people injured in a car accident. One has a broken arm and one has barely a scratch on their hand. An “equal” treatment of two people would be to give them both a band aid to treat their injuries. However, the equitable action would be to ensure that each gets the correct treatment for their injuries in a timely manner.

This difference between equality and equity is important in situations where an “equal” action would continue to keep one person in an unfair position over another. People are born into different positions and our society provides certain individuals with privileges that others do not share. Therefore, equity seeks to account for these unfair advantages that certain individuals inherit by giving people access to the proper resources, treatment, and more – in order to help them gain equal and fair social, economic, and political conditions.

2) Self-Help: This is the notion that a co-op is an organisation that will directly benefit its members and community by the actions it takes and the decisions its members make. Therefore, a co-op is not a charity; instead it is a tool for individuals and groups to use to directly improve their lives and communities through their own work and effort.

3) Self-Responsibility: Self-responsibility is a major aspect of co-operation. In a co-operative, all members are in charge; so individuals must be accountable for their actions, responsibilities, and duties. Thus, a co-op cannot function properly if the members are neglectful of their responsibilities to their job, the co-op, their fellow members, and themselves. Specifically, in producer co-operatives, all members are the owners and the body of the business, and so a producer co-op (such as the Long Road Olive Co-op Ltd) depends on the actions and accountability of the members more than any other business.

4) Solidarity: This is the value of “fellowship” amongst members of a co-op (producer-owners or member-owners) and more, including: other co-ops, organisations, and individuals who are linked by a shared concern or cause. Solidarity is the recognition that, in the co-operative movement, the betterment of individuals’ immediate and distant futures depends on the improvement of others’ lives and the fulfilment of their goals (and especially for those who are from less privileged backgrounds). Thus, it is essential for co-operatives and co-operators to recognise the importance of working together to support others in their struggles, goals, and efforts – and for others to do the same for them.

5) Equality: This concept is about giving people access to the same resources and treating them the same. One member (or joint membership) can cast only one vote in decision-making processes, regardless of the amount of capital contribution each member(ship) has.

6) Democracy: Co-operatives are controlled, managed and operated by their members, thus every member's suggestions are accepted and heard for the betterment of the services or products being extended. Every

member, regardless of the amount of their contribution, are treated fairly and their voice or opinion are also honoured and heard.

If you feel that your principles and values align with those outlined in this document, you're welcome to fill out a membership application form on the following page, and pay the associated membership costs. At the time of distribution this is a \$250 annual membership fee, plus at least one share in the co-op (\$300). If you decide to discontinue your membership in the co-op, your share capital will be refunded.



## Long Road Olive Co-operative Ltd.

### Application for membership or for additional shares

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Postal address \_\_\_\_\_

Grove address \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Number of olive trees under management \_\_\_\_\_

Varieties \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply –

(a) to be admitted as a member of the Long Road Olive Co-operative Limited and to be allotted \_\_\_\_\_ shares therein; **OR**

(b) to be allotted \_\_\_\_\_ additional shares in the abovenamed co-operative-  
and in respect of such application I lodge herewith in accordance with the rules the sum of  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ which sum is made up as follows:

Entrance fee	\$ 250
Paid up share capital (\$300 per share)	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

I am over the age of eighteen years; **OR**

I am under the age of eighteen years having been born on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date of birth).

If this application be approved and the shares as aforesaid be allotted to me I agree to pay outstanding share capital in accordance with section 121 of the *Co-operatives National Law (Victoria)* and I agree to be bound by the rules of the co-operative and by any alterations thereof registered in accordance with the abovenamed Act.

Applicant signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness name and signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Note.** Pursuant to section 120(1) of the *Co-operatives National Law (Victoria)*, no rights of membership shall be exercised until the member has made such payments or acquired such share or interest as specified in the rules in that behalf.  
*The Co-operatives National Law (Victoria)* can be found at the Appendix to the NSW *Co-operatives (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012*.