



## HERITAGE ORCHARD PARKS

### Help give your community access to Heritage Fruit Trees!

The South Coast Environment Society is proposing a new and exciting initiative, the first of its type in New Zealand, a network Heritage Orchard Parks throughout Southland.

*The idea is that we gift the trees to the communities; they are planted out in rows matching the family orchards they came from. We will teach the local community how to prune and look after the trees for the first five years, after which the area can be grazed and locals can harvest all the free fruit they can carry every year - for the next 80-100 years!*

Looking for suitable sites (public land) in the following areas:

Aparima/Scotts Gap/Ohai, Blackmount, Catlins coastal, Clinton or inland South Otago, Edendale/ Matura (Fairfax/Oreti/Drummond, Gore, Limehills/Browns/Otepiri, Nightcaps, Otautau, Tuatapere (site found), Waikaia, Woodlands/east Invercargill

Waituna, Woodlands and Riverton (sites established).

Ideally the land will be:

- Protected against development for the next 80-100 years - ideally the land will be in the care of council - so it could be a park, reserve or even road reserve.
- Sheltered, fenced,  $\frac{1}{2}$  - 1 acre section. In general they plan to plant around 30-100 trees at each site.
- Because these are "open orchards" they need to be accessible from the road, not necessarily road access (i.e. could walk over paper road to access site etc.).

After the trees are planted, the plan is to permanently label, and provide information with photos and stories of the orchards, the settlers and trees they planted.

### Background Open Orchard Project

Our Open Orchard team has travelled Southland taking cuttings from old orchards to preserve old varieties of apples and other fruit trees. Through many years of work and research the Society have visited over 100 of the oldest orchard remnants of Southland 19th Century and early 20th century orchards in Southland and now have 600 trees grafted and growing in a nursery situation ready for transplanting back into the communities from which they came.

- 750 apple trees grafted from old sites as well as 20 pears and plums
- 80 identified, 410 yet to be identified - upcoming opportunity for you to adopt a tree - sign up to our coastline newsletter to be kept informed
- 7,000+ trees into southland from our annual fruit tree sale
- Orchards in a number of Southland schools
- The society is now on the lookout for land which is suitable to establish around 12 Heritage Orchard Parks throughout Southland.

Anyone who has an old orchard which they have not yet visited is also asked to contact the environment centre in Riverton. Also seeking anyone with stories or memories from old Southland orchards.

**Further information:**

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