



## Olive tree pruning with late frost damages

[www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/](http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/)

The olive tree is a rustic plant whose cultivation has extended beyond its area of origin and in some of the expansion areas, winters can occasionally be harsh.

In 2018, in central-northern Italy, in the face of a late frost, the olive trees suffered more or less severe frost damage.

With slight frost damage, phylloptosis and some loss of production occurred, while with medium-intensity damage the plant suffered desiccation of the secondary branches.

The severely frost affected plants that have partially or totally dried out.

It is possible to reconstitute the plant through pruning; in case of slight damage a normal intensity pruning should be applied (20-25% of crown removed); for a medium damage, it is necessary the removal of the dry parts in correspondence of new green sprouts and the thinning of upper areas of foliage to let the light penetrate in the lower parts.

The plant is reduced to stimulate the emission of branches in the ventral area that will rebuild the damaged secondary branches.

In the case of serious damage, reconstitution can take place by pollarding (recovery time 3 years), if the olive tree has released numerous shoots from the backs of the branches. In the most serious cases, cutting the whole tree is necessary (recovery time: 5 years). In this case, a selection of the best suckers coming from those ones appearing from the stump in 1 or 2 years should be chosen to reconstitute the olive tree.



Figure 1. Frost damage on olive tree branch

### Further information

<http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/materials/innovation-tutorials/olive-tree-pruning>

[http://www.giorgiopannelli.it/public/pdf/Freddo/Vita\\_in\\_Campagna\\_2013.pdf](http://www.giorgiopannelli.it/public/pdf/Freddo/Vita_in_Campagna_2013.pdf)

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