



# HYBRID CYPRESS

**LEYLAND CYPRESS** cv. Leighton Green has been very widely planted as a shelterbelt throughout New Zealand. It is a hybrid with *Cupressus macrocarpa* and *Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* (Alaskan cypress) as parents. With its very fast growth rates and numerous branches, it makes an excellent shelterbelt provided it is regularly trimmed. It performs well on coastal sites, due to its tolerance of exposure and salt laden winds. The downside is that like its parent

Macrocarpa it suffers from the fungal disease Cypress Canker, an increasing problem in the moist warm parts of the North and South islands. More recent clones such as Ferndown, Stapehill and Naylor's Blue, with their lighter branch habit are more suited to timber plantation production.

**OVENS CYPRESS** is a single clone of a *Cupressus lusitanica/Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* hybrid cross. It has excellent form, good canker resistance and good yields of heart wood. While performing well over a wide range of climates and soil conditions throughout New Zealand, it does need protection from persistent exposure and won't tolerate salt laden winds. If you are uncertain whether cypress canker may strike your plantings, we recommend that you get local advice on the risk, observe if local hedges and shelter belts have canker damage, or use Ovens cypress to avoid the risk .

Cypress canker is a major disease of cypress in New Zealand, causing reduced growth, branch die back and stem malformation. Stress in the form of drought, waterlogged soils, wind exposure, humid weather, overzealous pruning and animal damage make Macrocarpa, Leyland, and Lawson cypress vulnerable. *Arizona*, *Lusitanica*, *Ovensii* and *Torulosa* are largely unaffected.

## HYBRID CYPRESS NEED CORRECT SITING AND ESTABLISHMENT

Ripping and spraying all weeds prior to planting, complete weed control and irrigating to avoid drought stress in the first three summers will give the best growth. If they are growing too quickly and the tops bend over, top them back to the bend so they will establish a new leader, avoiding the need to stake and risk later toppling. Side trim and top before you reach the final hedge or shelter belt height, to allow the branches to develop the final clipped structure. Avoid harsh trimming past the green foliage into dead wood, as it will not recover and grow green foliage again.

## HYBRID CYPRESS FOR TIMBER PRODUCTION

Planting site quality has a major influence on volume production and average tree diameter at harvest. Cypress prefer fertile well drained soils, normally found on lower slopes and valley bottoms. Mixed plantings of cutting grown hybrids and a nurse or companion species, offers protection against exposure and modifies the environment and side shading to encourage better form. Customers have had good results planting cutting grown hybrids at 350 stems per hectare and interplanting *Lusitanica* seedlings to a final stocking of 1100 per hectare at 3 x 3 metres.

Cypress need pruning and thinning for clearwood timber production. Pruned stem diameters ideally need to be less than 12 centimetres, leaving 5 metres of green crown with each pruning lift and aiming for a 6 metre pruned butt. Thin to between 300-350 stems per hectare by 10 years.

Cypress timber has a strong market profile, with both domestic and export opportunities. The different species are usually marketed as 'cypress' and not differentiated.



Leighton Green trimmed shelterbelt

*Many farm foresters want to grow a timber tree species other than radiata, producing a timber that is readily saleable, profitable and reasonably easy to grow. For some, hybrid cypress fit that bill.*

Ovens cypress pruned and thinned

