



IOC

INTERNATIONAL
OLIVE
COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER

Nº 190
MAY-JUNE 2024
ENGLISH EDITION



THE IOC FAMILY WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 Recent activities at the IOC

- 4 Bosnia and Herzegovina officially join the IOC
- 5 The Republic of Azerbaijan joins the IOC
- 6 The world olive sector meets in Siena
- 7 The IOC participates in the 5th International Congress on Olive Oils, the Olive Grove and Health
- 8 The IOC was invited to participate in Sol Verona
- 9 The IOC at the inauguration of the 10th Panhellenic Congress on the Development of Greek Agriculture
- 11 IOC participates in the harmonization conference for virgin olive oil tasting panels
- 13 The IOC at the American Association of Food Industries' convention
- 14 The IOC at the 16th edition of the international competition "QOCO, a trickle of oil on the plate"
- 15 The IOC at *Diario Córdoba's* newsroom on the olive grove's sustainability
- 16 The IOC participates in the presentation day for the results of ripe *Picual* variety oils

17 Future activities

- 18 Program of the 119th session of the IOC council of members
- 19 Madrid to be the world's extra virgin olive oil capital at the 2024 Mario Solinas Quality Awards ceremony – Northern Hemisphere
- 21 The first edition of the Olive Oil World Congress will take place from June 26 - 28
- 22 The IOC and the UC Davis Olive Center enhance their collaboration
- 23 New dates: seminar on the valorization of olive by-products and waste minimization

24 Meetings of the Executive Secretariat

- 25 The Executive Director's meeting with Spain's Minister for Foreign Affairs
- 26 Italy and the IOC reinforce their alliance
- 27 IOC mission to the USA
- 29 Brazil and the IOC deepen their bilateral cooperation
- 30 The IOC convenes its chemist experts

31 Publications and networks

- 32 Follow us through our networks!



RECENT ACTIVITIES
AT THE IOC



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA OFFICIALLY JOIN THE IOC

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA COMPLETED THE PROCESS TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL OLIVE COUNCIL. THIS BALKAN COUNTRY HAS BEEN PART OF THE IOC SINCE FEBRUARY 20, 2024, WHEN IT RATIFIED THE COMPLETION OF THE ACCESSION PROCESS. THIS WAS ACHIEVED BY DEPOSITING THE INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK.

On Wednesday, April 17th, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ambassador to Spain, Ms. **Vesna Andree Zaimović**, was welcomed by the newly appointed IOC Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**. Both parties expressed their will to strengthen the ties between the international organization and this country, which has seen an expansion in olive oil production in recent years. The Executive Director informed the Ambassador of key upcoming dates, including the meeting of the Advisory Committee in Siena, Italy (May 29), and the Council of Members committee and plenary sessions to be held in Madrid in June. He also stressed the importance of having experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina participate in the IOC's expert groups, particularly in the field of chemistry, for methods of analysis and quality of olive oils and olive-pomace oils, organoleptic assessment of olive oil, standardization of table olives, and the statistics group.

With the incorporation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the IOC, this intergovernmental organization now counts on 20 Member States composed of 47 countries. You can find the full list of IOC members [here](#).





THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN JOINS THE IOC

The IOC's Council of Members approved the decision of accession of the **Republic of Azerbaijan** on October 23, 2022, on the occasion of its 116th session. Azerbaijan, which has been an Observer at the IOC since the 114th session, is officially a Member State of the Organization since **April 30, 2024**.

The IOC is honored to welcome the Republic of Azerbaijan among its members and looks forward to the country's participation in upcoming activities and projects.



INTERNATIONAL
OLIVE
COUNCIL





THE WORLD OLIVE SECTOR MEETS IN SIENA

ITALY HOSTS THE 62ND ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

On Wednesday 29 May, Italy welcomed the delegates of the IOC's **Advisory Committee (AC) for Olive Oil and Table Olives**. Around 80 sector representatives from all over the world gathered in Siena to reflect on the current state of the olive industry and evaluate its current challenges and opportunities. The AC is a unique and highly valuable discussion forum for the olive sector stakeholders and the IOC, enabling olive oil and table olive producer, consumer, industry and trade representatives to determine challenges and priorities for the future.

The session, organized with the support of the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, was held at the Santa Maria della Scala Museum complex in Siena. The meeting opened with welcoming remarks from the Undersecretary of State for the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, **Patrizio Giacomo La Pietra**; the Chairman of the IOC's Council of Members, **Javad Mirarabrazi**; AC Chairman, **Absessalem Loued**; the AC Vice-President for Olive Oil, **Gennaro Siculo**; and the IOC's Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**. The meeting was chaired by the last four, along with **M'Hmaed Belasla**, AC Vice-President for Table Olives.

The IOC Executive Secretariat put forward the activities carried out from the 61st AC meeting and the draft decisions that will be submitted to the upcoming 119th session of the Council of Members. Among the many topics of discussion on the occasion of the 62nd AC session, the sector representatives presented their previsions for the next campaign, deliberated on the impact of climate change on olive oil production and the prospects behind measuring the olive tree's carbon balance, the ravaging ramifications of the *Xylella fastidiosa* pest, and the importance of fostering international cooperation to face common challenges. The IOC Executive Director took note of the participants' interventions, appreciating their valuable inputs and shared experiences.

On the margins of the 62nd AC session, IOC Director **Lillo** and Undersecretary of State **La Pietra** held a bilateral meeting that reaffirmed the close relationship between the [IOC and the Italian Republic](#).

This timely gathering was topped off by a technical visit organized by the Italian authorities to the olive growing areas of Tuscany. The participants had the opportunity to visit the olive mills and installations of the [Oleificio Toscano Morettini Frantoio di San Gimignano](#) and the Tuscan Olive Growers Association ([Olivicoltori Toscani Associati](#)), as well as the packer complex of the [Montalbano Agricola Alimentare Toscana](#), bringing them closer to one of Italy's most important olive oil and table olive producing regions.





THE IOC PARTICIPATES IN THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON OLIVE OILS, THE OLIVE GROVE AND HEALTH

On Wednesday 8 May, IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** inaugurated the **5th International Congress on Olive Oils, the Olive Grove and Health** alongside the Spanish Minister for Agriculture, **Luis Planas**, and other high-level representatives in Jaén's Provincial Palace. The congress, which was organized by the **University Institute for Research in Olive Grove and Olive Oils (INUO)** with the support of the Jaén Provincial Council, brought together international experts, scientists, researchers and health professionals to address topics such as olive oil's countless health benefits, its gastronomic relevance and its role in tackling climate change.



Juan Antonio Polo Palomino, Head of the IOC's Olive Oil Technology and Environment Department, also participated in the congress' fifth session on "Climate change, production and consumption of olive oil" and delivered a presentation on the olive tree's role in facing climate change, highlighting its positive carbon balance and its function as a carbon sink.

This timely international congress, which is running in its 5th edition, was organized by the INUO, the **University of Jaén's** research institute for olive groves and olive oils. The IOC and the University of Jaén have a longstanding collaboration aimed at advancing research, education, and innovation in the olive oil sector.



THE IOC WAS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN SOL VERONA

The IOC Executive Secretariat participated in the international **Sol Verona Fair** in Italy last April, aimed at providing a universal platform for producers to showcase their high-quality extra virgin olive oils (EVOO) and other premium agro-food products. The IOC's Economy and Promotion and Standardization and Research Units were invited to participate in a series of discussions regarding olive oil.

On the occasion of the 28th international olive oil trade show, the IOC was represented by its Head of the Economy and Promotion Unit, **María Juárez**, who participated in a panel discussion in the inaugural conference on the topic of "The new geography of world olive oil: between production and consumption" (April 15th). Juárez took stock of the current situation of the olive oil market, analyzed the sector's main challenges, such as those derived from climate change and the appearance of diseases like *Xylella fastidiosa*, and encouraged a comprehensive approach involving producers, exporters, government authorities and other relevant stakeholders to overcome these. Also participating at this round table were, among others, representatives from the Italian Ministry of Agricultural Policies and Food Sovereignty, the Tunisian National Agriculture Observatory and the Spanish Fundación del Olivar.



Also speaking for the IOC was Dr. **Yousra Antit**, Head of the Olive Oil Chemistry Department, who participated in the round table discussion on "The identity of EVOO is at risk" (April 16th). **Antit** – who shared the roundtable with other key speakers, including representatives of FOA Italy, *Denominazione origine Italia* and ICQRF – provided an overview of the IOC's work, particularly in terms of standardization and research, and recalled the importance of the scientific discussions that result from the IOC's diverse expert meetings. She emphasized that the expert groups, among other activities, follow established protocols to address out-of-standard parameters in genuine EVOOs, seeking to understand their anomalies and finding sustainable solutions that safeguard their authenticity. As examples, the Organization's representative spoke about the IOC's study on total and individual sterols, currently in its third and final year, as well as the ongoing analysis of multi-year data aimed at assessing the dimension of climate change on olive oil production.

Continuously updating parameters based on scientific evidence is a priority for the IOC, with the Executive Secretariat committed to finding scientifically rigorous solutions approved by experts.



RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE IOC

9

THE IOC AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE 10TH PANHELLENIC CONGRESS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEK AGRICULTURE

Jaime Lillo, IOC Executive Director, participated in the [10th Panhellenic Congress on the Development of Greek Agriculture](#) in Kalamata (Greece), last Friday, April 26th, organized by [Gaia Epicheirein](#), an alliance of Greek agricultural cooperative associations. The congress brought together over 22,000 attendees in person and online, as well as 60 distinguished speakers from the Greek, European Union (EU) and international agricultural sectors. Under the broader theme “*What kind of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) do we want for Greece and the EU? The big challenges facing agriculture now and in the future*”, **Lillo** participated in the inauguration session alongside several key speakers, including former Greek Prime Minister **Antonis Samaras** and current Minister for Rural Development and Food, **Lefteris Avgenakis**.



The IOC’s Executive Director also gave a keynote presentation on the topic “*Policies and best practices for a sustainable and resilient olive oil & table olives sector: innovation, cooperation, market performance*”, where he took stock of the current state of the global olive oil sector, analyzing current challenges and future opportunities for development. Other speakers in this session included **Georgios Stratakos**,





RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE IOC

10

Secretary General of the Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food; **Koen Dillen**, Head of the European Commission's Arable Crops and Olive Oil Unit and EU representative to the IOC; and **Gennaro Siculo**, Vice-President of the IOC's Advisory Committee.

The congress was followed by a technical field visit to the olive orchards of the **Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Messinia**, where attendees explored the implementation of smart farming and olive fly control practices. The agriculture-focused Greek magazine Efori Gi took the opportunity to interview Lillo on the occasion of his visit to this important olive producing country. The interview is available [here](#).

Greece, which is represented by the EU as an IOC Member State, is one of the world's most important producers of olive oil and table olives, often participating in a diverse range of IOC activities aimed at enhancing the sustainable development of its olive sector.





IOC PARTICIPATES IN THE HARMONIZATION CONFERENCE FOR VIRGIN OLIVE OIL TASTING PANELS



On May 16, 2024, the **Fundación del Olivar** at its headquarters in Menjíbar (Jaén) hosted the 4th harmonization conference for official IOC-recognized virgin olive oil tasting panels, a must-attend event for professionals in the sector. **Ibtihel Khemakhem**, Head of the IOC's Laboratory and Panel Management Section, took part in the inauguration of this year's event, alongside **Soledad Aranda**, Jaén's Regional Delegate for Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development and President of the Fundación del Olivar, and **Francisco de Paula Rodríguez García**, Technical Advisor to the Andalucía Administration's Directorate General for Industry, Innovation and the Food Chain.

Ibtihel Khemakhem stressed the importance of organizing tasting panel harmonization workshops, one of the IOC's main missions, in order to minimize discrepancies between their results, as well as improve the quality of virgin olive oils and facilitate international trade. The digital sensory analysis platform for virgin olive oils provided by the **Fundación del Olivar** was used during the conference.





RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE IOC

12

This platform was selected by the IOC following a public call for tenders as part of the Organization's activities to harmonize IOC-recognized tasting panels. It has already been used at three IOC-organized panel harmonization workshops with satisfactory results. The Organization has made the platform available to all its recognized tasting panels for use in their daily tasting sessions.

Click on this [link](#) to view the interview given by the IOC representative on the occasion of the harmonization conference.





THE IOC AT THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FOOD INDUSTRIES' CONVENTION

Imene Trabelsi, Head of the Promotion Department at the IOC, took part as a speaker in a convention organized by the **American Association of Food Industries (AFI)** in Marrakech from May 2nd to 5th. The event convened prominent stakeholders from the food and olive oil sectors in both the United States and Morocco. Given that the **North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA)** operates under the umbrella of AFI, the conference provided an excellent platform for the IOC to present the Organization's mission, objectives, and primary activities. Trabelsi seized the opportunity to engage with US food trade institutions keen on understanding global market trends pertaining to olive oil and table olives, highlighting the IOC's pivotal role in promoting trade standards and fostering the worldwide appreciation of olive products.



On May 3rd, **Imene Trabelsi** presented the IOC's promotional initiatives and offered insights into the global as well as Moroccan olive oil and table olives market trends. Following this, a highly productive discussion unfolded, featuring diverse presentations that engaged numerous Moroccan officials from FOODEX alongside representatives from the private food and olive oil sectors. Additionally, participants from the United States, including delegates from the FDA, USDA, and the private food sector, contributed to the discourse. Notably, **Joseph Profaci**, the Executive Director of NAOOA, provided a comprehensive overview of the US olive oil sector, highlighting its unique challenges and future prospects.



THE IOC AT THE 16TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION “QOCO, A TRICKLE OF OIL ON THE PLATE”

“[QOCO, a trickle of oil on the plate](#)” is an international competition organized by the **Municipality of Andria** (Italy) and the national association *Città dell’Olio*, bringing together young chefs from all over the world who elaborate dishes featuring one main ingredient: extra virgin olive oil. The IOC has given this competition its institutional patronage for two consecutive editions. This year, Dr. **Mercedes Fernández**, Head of the IOC’s Standardization and Research Unit, took part in the 16th edition of QOCO as a member of the international jury (March 22 to 24, 2024,).



The Mayor of Andria, leaders from the *Città dell’Olio* association, and representatives from the Slow Food movement also gathered to explore potential future collaborations, discussing the idea of outsourcing and the potential for internationalizing the competition. Dr. **Fernández** participated in a variety of initiatives focused on disseminating the culture of extra virgin olive oil and its application in high-quality gastronomy and catering. The program included other events and visits to oil mills in the region.





THE IOC AT *DIARIO CÓRDOBA*'S NEWSROOM ON THE OLIVE GROVE'S SUSTAINABILITY

The IOC, represented by **Juan Antonio Polo Palomino**, Head of the Olive Oil Technology and Environment Department, participated in a newsroom organized by *Diario Córdoba* on Thursday 5 April. The newsroom was centered around the topic of the olive grove's sustainability and the challenges that lie ahead for the sector.



In his intervention, the IOC's representative highlighted the olive grove's particular characteristic as a "zero waste" sector, emphasizing that all by-products can be taken advantage of and valorized. He put forward that the United Nations is betting on the idea of "planetary health", a concept that reflects the relationship between human and environmental health, and reiterated that olive oil is the healthiest and most sustainable fat that can be consumed.

Polo Palomino participated alongside several experts, including **José María Penco**, director of the Spanish Association of Olive Tree Municipalities, **Rosa Gallardo**, director of the School of Agricultural Engineering and Forestry (ETSIAM), and **Lola Amo**, Mayor of the Spanish municipality of Montoro. The event was organized in the framework of the [Montoro Olive Fair](#) which counted on the IOC's patronage and that took place from 7 to 9 May, 2024, in Córdoba.



THE IOC PARTICIPATES IN THE PRESENTATION DAY FOR THE RESULTS OF RIPE *PICUAL* VARIETY OILS

The IOC Executive Secretariat was represented by Dr. **Yousra Antit**, Head of the Organization's Olive Chemistry Department, at the day for the presentation of results of oils from the ripe *Picual* variety, held on April 22 at the Andalusian Institute for Agricultural Research and Training (**IFAPA**, for *Instituto Andaluz de Investigación y Formación Agraria, Pesquera, Alimentaria y de la Producción Ecológica*) in Alameda del Obispo (Cordoba, Spain).

The study was conducted by IFAPA and the Spanish Association of Olive Growing Municipalities (**AEMO**, Asociación Española de Municipios del Olivo).

In their inaugural speeches, the authorities thanked the IOC for supporting this project and for setting up an electronic working group (eWG) within the IOC's sensory analysis expert group in 2021 to study this issue.

Following the presentation of the results of the phenolic, volatile and physico-chemical studies, the participants took part in a tasting session, which was followed by an interesting debate between the assisting heads of panels.

Similar work has been entrusted by the IOC to another eWG, which is currently studying olive oils from the *Chemlali* variety.





FUTURE ACTIVITIES



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

18

PROGRAM OF THE 119TH SESSION OF THE IOC COUNCIL OF MEMBERS

The 119th session of the Council of Members of the International Olive Council (IOC) is in full swing. Representatives of the 20 IOC member countries (Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Egypt, Georgia, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, the European Union and Uruguay) took part in the meetings of the various specialized committees from June 11 to 13. They will convene again on June 25 at the plenary session. Representatives from Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, South Africa, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Arab League, Mercosur, the Gulf Economic Council and the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), have been

invited to attend this IOC session as **observers**, as has the Republic of San Marino, who will officially present its application to join the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives.

The **Administrative and Financial Affairs Committee** met on June 11 and 13 to deal with the usual issues concerning the IOC budget, member contributions, human resources and other matters of interest.

On June 11, the Executive Secretariat informed the **Economic and Promotion Committee** of developments in olive oil and table olive production, consumption and trade, as well as the latest results of the consumer behavior study. In the field of promotion, the Committee was informed of the activities that have taken place as part of the IOC campaign in Australia and Brazil, future activities planned in various countries, and the IOC's forthcoming call for grants for national promotion activities, in particular for the organization of **World Olive Day**. The Executive Secretariat also informed the Committee of the activities of the Observatory and Information Systems Department and its plans for the rest of the year.





ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

19

The **Chemistry and Standardization Committee** met on the morning of Thursday June 12. The Executive Secretariat presented a progress report on activities carried out since the last meeting, including the results of work carried out by expert groups in various fields, ongoing studies on non-standard parameters such as sterols, MOSH and MOAH, ring tests, international standardization work (CODEX, ISO, WCO, WTO, EU....), proposals for the revision of methods of analysis, the IOC's Mario Solinas Quality Awards in the northern and southern hemispheres, IOC patronage of tasting courses and competitions organized by the relevant authorities, recognition of physico-chemical analysis laboratories and tasting panels, collaboration with the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), the Olive Health Information System (OHIS), collaboration with the *Fundación del Olivar* through the IOC PANEL platform in order to harmonize tasting panels and minimize discrepancies, and follow-up work on the self-monitoring of oils sold on the markets of non-member importing countries.

In the afternoon, the Executive Secretariat briefed the **Committee on Technology and the Environment** on activities organized in the fields of research, development and training, in particular progress on the World Catalogue of Olive Varieties, work on the carbon balance of the olive sector and recognition of carbon credits, and the project to update the *World Encyclopedia of the Olive Tree*. Also on the agenda were IOC scholarships for students from member countries taking part in specialized courses or PhDs, and the international seminar on sustainable development in olive growing (see article below) scheduled for September 2024 at the Olive Center of the University of California at Davis. The Executive Secretariat presented a proposal for pursuing current programs and launching new activities in the second half of 2024.

The members will meet at the **plenary session** on Tuesday June 25 to adopt the committee reports and proposed decisions.

The ceremony of the **Mario Solinas Extra Virgin Olive Oil Quality Awards** (see article below) will take place just after the plenary session of the Council of Members. This prestigious non-profit competition rewards the best extra virgin olive oils produced in the world, and aims to encourage individual producers, producer associations and packers in producing countries to market extra virgin olive oils with harmonious organoleptic characteristics, as well as to encourage consumers to recognize and appreciate the sensory attributes of this type of oil.

MADRID TO BE THE WORLD'S EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL CAPITAL AT THE 2024 MARIO SOLINAS QUALITY AWARDS CEREMONY – NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

- The ceremony will be held on **June 25** at the *Caja de Música* auditorium of the *Palacio de Cibeles* in Madrid, as part of the **119th session** of the **Council of Members** of the **International Olive Council** (IOC).
- On the occasion of the **24th edition** of the **Mario Solinas Quality Awards**, which rewards the quality of the best extra virgin olive oils, the IOC has signed a collaboration agreement with the *Madrid Salud* municipal body.
- On June 5, 35 prescribers and influencers took part in the traditional tasting of this year's **6 gold medal winners**, at the MOM Culinary Institute in Madrid.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

20

This year, the IOC is organizing the awards ceremony within the framework of an agreement signed with *Madrid Salud* to carry out institutional activities dedicated to extra virgin olive oil.

Madrid Salud, a public body attached to the Madrid City Council, is responsible for managing municipal policies in the fields of public health, food quality and safety. Its activities include collaborating with institutions and entities with a common goal, in this case the promotion of actions aimed at raising awareness of the quality of food products, the protection of consumer rights and the prevention of fraudulent, misleading and adulterating practices, including initiatives aimed at the official control of foodstuffs.

THE 2024 MARIO SOLINAS QUALITY AWARDS

Convened in December 2023, the Mario Solinas Quality Awards received 113 submissions from 10 countries. Once again, Spain submitted the largest number of extra virgin olive oil samples (57), followed by Tunisia (27), Portugal (15), Italy (4), Jordan (3), Greece (2), China (2), Algeria (1), Croatia (1) and France (1).

The members of the international jury, composed of leaders of IOC-recognized panels, selected **the six highest-rated oils in each category.**

The Mario Solinas Quality Awards promote the worldwide production of extra virgin olive oils of exceptional quality. It encourages individual producers, producer associations and packers in producing countries to market extra virgin olive oils with harmonious organoleptic characteristics, and seeks to raise consumer awareness of this unique product, inviting them to recognize and appreciate the sensory attributes of these quality olive oils.

TASTING – A SENSORY EXPERIENCE USING DESCRIPTORS

The now traditional tasting of the gold medal winners of this 24th edition will take place on June 5 at the MOM Culinary Institute cooking school. Descriptors illustrating the astonishing qualities of each of the award-winning extra virgin olive oils were used for the occasion.

First prizes in the various categories include two extra virgin olive oils from Spain, two from Italy and two from Tunisia.

For more information, click [here](#).





ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

21

THE FIRST EDITION OF THE OLIVE OIL WORLD CONGRESS WILL TAKE PLACE FROM JUNE 26 - 28

THE IOC IS AN INSTITUTIONAL PARTNER OF THE OOWC

The first edition of the **Olive Oil World Congress (OOWC)** will be hosted in Madrid from the 26th to the 28th of June, 2024, at the headquarters of the Spanish National Research Council in Madrid (Spain). This important event will gather the world's leading speakers on olive oil subjects, generating knowledge about the latest developments and innovations in every stage of the value chain.

The OOWC will take place in the framework of the 119th session of the Council of Members, allowing those IOC member country representatives attending the session in person to enjoy the congress on the next day. The event will open with an inaugural lecture from **Jaime Lillo**, IOC Executive Director, as well as other high-level political authorities, and will count on the participation of a number of IOC experts, such as **Mercedes Fernández**, Head of the Standardization and Research Unit, **Juan Antonio Polo Palomino**, Head of the Olive Oil Technology and Environment Department, and **Imene Trabelsi**, Head of the Promotion Department.

It will bring together a diversity of olive sector stakeholders from more than 50 countries with the aim of sharing experiences, promoting the exchange of knowledge and best practices, while addressing the main developments and challenges facing olive groves in the coming years, such as climate change, product quality and safety, hydraulic resources, health, sustainability and marketing.

You can read the detailed program of the OOWC by clicking on [this link](#).





THE IOC AND THE UC DAVIS OLIVE CENTER ENHANCE THEIR COLLABORATION

THE ORGANIZATIONS WILL CONVENE THE INTERNATIONAL OLIVE SUSTAINABILITY
CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER 2024

On Thursday, May 23, the **International Olive Council** (IOC) signed a collaboration agreement with the **University of California** (UC) **Davis Olive Center** with the aim of organizing the **International Olive Sustainability Conference** (IOSC) at the latter's campus from 5 to 7 September, 2024.

The agreement, signed by the IOC's Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**, and the UC Davis Olive Center's Executive Director, **Javier Fernández Salvador**, sets out the terms for the institutions' joint collaboration on this timely conference. The IOSC will bring together multiple stakeholders, including researchers, growers and producers from around the world, to learn and discuss sustainable olive farming and olive oil production. The themes of the conference will range from soil health and biodiversity to different uses of mill by-products and input management, among many others. The conversation will also focus on dietary choices and olive oil's countless benefits for both human and planetary health, as well as addressing economic and social sustainability issues. The event promises to be a turning point for collaboration and discussions regarding the present and future of the olive sector.

[Click here](#) to read the draft IOSC program.

The **UC Davis Olive Center** is a renowned research and education center at the University of California, Davis, established in 2008 and dedicated to the study and promotion of olives and olive oil. It is part of the **Centers of Excellence at the Robert Mondavi Institute**, with more than 15 years of experience working on olives in California and worldwide to enhance experts' skills.



INTERNATIONAL
OLIVE
SUSTAINABILITY
CONFERENCE



NEW DATES: SEMINAR ON THE VALORIZATION OF OLIVE BY-PRODUCTS AND WASTE MINIMIZATION

THE SEMINAR, ORGANIZED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF JAÉN, WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 16 TO 20 SEPTEMBER, 2024

The seminar on the **“Sustainable valorization of by-products and waste minimization in the olive industry”**, organized by the IOC’s Olive Growing, Olive Oil Technology and Environment Unit together with the University of Jaén, is postponed to September for reasons beyond the IOC’s control and in order to guarantee the participation of students from all IOC member countries. The course will now take place from **Monday 16 to Friday 20 September 2024**, in morning and afternoon sessions held in English, French and Spanish at the University’s campus for in-person participants, and online for those unable to travel to Spain.

It is well known that olive trees are one of the most important crops in the Mediterranean region and beyond, being a fundamental economic and land resource. We live in a time where reducing environmental pollution is one of humanity’s most significant and urgent challenges. In this regard, the olive oil and table olive production chain represents a double-edged blade: it generates by-products, such as pruning waste, wastewater and pomace, which are difficult to manage and are a source of environmental concern while, simultaneously, being a very attractive potential source of income. There is growing interest in the effective and sustainable use of these by-products, making the spreading of knowledge and the dissemination of novel approaches, methods and innovative tools for their management a key item for the olive sector’s agenda.



It is in this context that the IOC and the University of Jaén will sign an operational agreement for the organization of the aforementioned seminar in September. The course is aimed at technicians from IOC member countries with an interest in environmental governance and the management of the olive production chain. They will acquire in-depth knowledge about an array of topics, including: possible effects of the management and processing of by-products; technologies used for waste treatment and reuse; usage of by-products for energy purposes; treatment of liquid effluents from olive oil mills; physico-chemical processes for reducing toxicity; phenolic compound reduction for their potential use as bioactive compounds in food; applications of olive mill wastewater to soil; and alternative uses of solid wastes as compost for producing low-cost fertilizers.

The forthcoming seminar aligns with the IOC’s extensive initiatives aimed at enhancing the sustainability of the olive sector and disseminating knowledge about the growingly appreciated alternative uses of olive by-products, which could greatly influence the investment returns within the olive sector.



MEETINGS OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MEETING WITH SPAIN'S MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS



On Monday, May 20, the IOC's **Executive Director Jaime Lillo** and the Representative of External Relations **Andoni Olano** held a bilateral meeting with Spain's Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, **José Manuel Albares**, and **Sergio Cuesta**, Chief of Staff.

The Executive Director and the Minister discussed about the current situation of the global olive sector, taking stock of the current crop forecast and the market prices of olive products. **Lillo** also informed the Minister about the organization's expansion and the recent accession of new countries to the IOC, including Azerbaijan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia. He also took the opportunity to present the promotional activities that are being carried out in countries with considerable production and consumption potential of olive oil, such as the United States, Brazil and Australia. In this regard, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs offered the full support of its embassies to the IOC.

Spain, the world's first producer of olive oil and table olives, is represented by the European Union (EU) at the IOC, and has hosted the organization's headquarters since its establishment under the auspices of the United Nations in 1959.





ITALY AND THE IOC REINFORCE THEIR ALLIANCE

IOC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND ITALIAN UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE HOLD A BILATERAL MEETING

The International Olive Council's (IOC) **Executive Director** and the **Italian Undersecretary of State for Agriculture** convened a bilateral meeting in the framework of the 62nd session of the **Advisory Committee for Olive Oil and Table Olives**. The meeting, held in the Italian city of Siena, underscores the ongoing partnership and commitment between the IOC and the Italian Republic to reinforce the olive oil and table olive sector.

During the meeting, **Undersecretary of State La Pietra** welcomed **IOC Executive Director Lillo**, expressing his satisfaction with the fact that the olive producing region of Tuscany is hosting this year's Advisory Committee meeting. Both representatives highlighted Italy's undisputed importance for both the IOC and the olive sector as a whole.

Both at the bilateral meeting and in his welcome remarks at the Advisory Committee session, **Undersecretary La Pietra** emphasized the importance of encouraging cross-sector collaboration to enhance the comprehensive sustainability of olive growing and the tree's by-products, recalling the crop's fundamental value for the Mediterranean region, home to most of the world's olive trees.

IOC Executive Director Lillo shared his gratitude for the Italian Ministry of Agriculture's efforts to welcome the organization's Advisory Committee, an essential forum for olive sector representatives from all over the world. He recognized Italy's indispensable contribution to advancing olive growing, and requested the Undersecretary's support to put olive oil and table olives at the center of the spotlight as part of the solution for sustainably feeding a rapidly growing global population.

Both representatives welcomed the opportunity to enhance the cooperation between Italy and the world's only international organization dedicated to the olive oil and table olive sector.





IOC MISSION TO THE USA

IOC representatives **Jaime Lillo**, Executive Director, and Dr **Mercedes Fernández**, Head of the Standardization and Research Unit, participated in the event “Olive oil and the American table: Dialogues on the future” on April 9, 2024, in Napa Valley, California. This event was part of a collaborative initiative with the **Culinary Institute of America (CIA)**, the IOC’s strategic partner in the USA. [The cooperation between both institutions](#), spanning over the last 4 years, is aimed at strengthening the ties between the IOC and the US.

The goal of the first session entitled “**A vision for the Future: Meeting our challenges, Leveraging Opportunities**” was to highlight the benefits and opportunities for the US if it became a member of the IOC. Lillo presented the IOC’s activities and objectives, in particular relating to standardization, quality, health and olive oil tasting. Part of the objectives under the agreement signed between the IOC and the CIA are to continue to disseminate scientific information, in particular on IOC standards and the physico-chemical, organoleptic and nutritional characteristics of olive products; to encourage sustainability, technology transfer, research, education, harmonization and dissemination of information on the importance of olive oil and its impact on society; and to increase and improve technical knowledge about olive oil and quality through culinary influencers in the US.





MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

28



After an enriching debate, a delightful lunch was arranged, featuring a menu showcasing dishes crafted with award-winning oils from the 2023 Mario Solinas Quality Award. These dishes were prepared by two esteemed chefs known for their expertise in utilizing and pairing olive oils. Dr **Fernández** also led a tasting session during which participants had the opportunity to taste the 2024 award-winning olive oils of the Mario Solinas Quality Award, all of which were tasted in line with the IOC's method for the organoleptic assessment of virgin olive oil (COI/T.20/Doc. No 15).

In the margins of the mission, the IOC officials also participated in several technical visits to the **Olive Center UC Davis** and local Californian producers. They also held an insightful meeting with **Karen Ross**, Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).

The Napa Valley event was the result of the meetings and events held in April 2023 in California and in October 2023 in Washington DC. On both occasions, sector stakeholders and representatives from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) suggested that the IOC organize a meeting in California with US producers.





BRAZIL AND THE IOC DEEPEN THEIR BILATERAL COOPERATION

On Thursday 4 April, IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** was welcomed by the Brazilian Ambassador to Spain, **Orlando Leite Ribeiro**, and the Embassy's Commercial Counselor, **Flavio Bettarello**. **Lillo** took the opportunity to present to the Ambassador the updates of the IOC's promotion campaign in Brazil, scheduled to be launched later this year, to which the Ambassador offered his help and support. The IOC Executive Director also informed the Brazilian representatives of the dates of the awards ceremony of the first edition of the **Mario Solinas Quality Award** in the southern hemisphere which will take place in Uruguay in November. Ambassador **Leite Ribeiro** reaffirmed his country's support to the IOC and welcomed the many initiatives the Organization is putting in place to shed light on the global olive sector.

Brazil, with a growing olive oil sector, has been an **observer member country** of the IOC since 2018.





THE IOC CONVENES ITS CHEMIST EXPERTS

On 3 and 4 April 2024, the IOC held a hybrid meeting with **expert chemists** from around the world. The meeting was attended by observers from several countries, including Australia, the USA and Canada, as well as representatives from the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat and the IOC Advisory Committee.

Jaime Lillo, IOC Executive Director, highlighted the importance of harmonizing international standards to avoid barriers in trade, emphasizing the IOC's role in developing scientifically based studies in this regard. Dr. **Mercedes Fernández**, Head of the Standardization and Research Unit, presented the documents adopted at the 118th session of the Council of Members and the ones to be presented at the upcoming 119th session in June.

Meeting participants also addressed other key issues and future priorities for the sector, such as the updating of the methods of analysis with a view to ensuring product quality and authenticity to protect consumers. The next expert meeting is scheduled for 8 and 9 October 2024 by videoconference.





PUBLICATIONS AND NETWORKS



FOLLOW US THROUGH OUR NETWORKS!

Many of you are already following us on our online networks, through the International Olive Council's press review [OLIVE NEWS](#), which gathers and publishes the latest news from the international olive sector and other topics of interest such as the Mediterranean diet, health, etc., in Spanish, English, French and Italian. The main advantage of this press review, which is updated daily, is its swiftness: you can access it at any time if you want to keep up to date with the latest news from the sector. Since its launch in December 2013, more than 12,500 articles in the olive sector's main media have been collected through this press review, which has 9,200 subscribers and has already received almost 378,000 visits. All the articles published on [Olive News](#) are also available on X (formerly Twitter) at the following address @iocolivenews. The IOC also has a dedicated page on LinkedIn (International Olive Council).

Stay tuned!





STAY TUNED!

<http://www.internationaloliveoil.org>

Keep up with the olive sector through Olive News:

<https://www.scoop.it/topic/olive-news>

and everything that is going on at the IOC:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-olive-council/>

Our scientific journal *Olivae* is available at:

<https://www.internationaloliveoil.org/publications/>

IOC Headquarters
C/ Príncipe de Vergara, 154
28002, Madrid

