



IOC

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AT THE IOC



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THE IOC TAKES PART IN THE INTERNATIONAL OLIVE SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION WAS ONE OF THE ORGANISING PARTNERS OF THIS CONFERENCE

The first edition of the [International Olive Sustainability Conference](#) (IOSC) took place from 5 to 7 September 2024 at the University of California at Davis (UC Davis). The International Olive Council (IOC), one of the [organising partners](#) of the UC Davis' Olive Center, played an active role in this international event. The IOSC brought together numerous representatives from the international olive sector and the academic and research worlds, as well as professionals and national and international organisations.

During the opening session, IOC Deputy Executive Director **Abderraouf Laajimi** devoted his speech to the current situation and the challenges facing the world olive sector in terms of sustainable development. He took the opportunity to present the global olive sector, highlighting the role of the IOC, the only intergovernmental organisation devoted to the olive world, in an international context that calls for dialogue to meet the sector's challenges and leverage the opportunities at hand. In particular, he stressed that this future vision was based on the following three fundamental pillars:

1. Produce more sustainably in the face of globalisation by facilitating trade, defending quality and authenticity standards, and protecting consumers.
2. Highlight the contribution of olive oil to human health.
3. Promote the vital role of this unique product in supporting planetary health. The aim is to foster the sustainable development of the olive sector in the context of climate change, through targeted training and greater awareness. This can contribute to a balanced carbon cycle and help ensure a healthier planet for future generations.

The IOC's second contribution to the conference was devoted to the carbon balance of olive growing and its contribution to fighting climate change. **Lhassane Sikaoui**, Head of the IOC's Olive Growing, Olive Oil Technology and Environment Unit, presented the Organisation's strategy in this area, underlining the fundamental role of olive growing as a sustainable alternative considering its low impact in terms water and energy resource use, as well as its positive carbon balance.



The [UC Davis Olive Center](#) is a renowned research and education centre at the University of California, Davis, established in 2008 and dedicated to the study and promotion of olives and olive oil. It is one of the Robert Mondavi Institute's centres of excellence.



MEETING WITH THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES AND OLIVE OIL SECTOR

A RECAP OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VISIT TO PORTUGAL



IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** travelled to Portugal from 9 to 11 September to meet the country's newly appointed Minister for Agriculture, **José Manuel Fernandes**, as well as representatives from the University of Évora and the Portuguese olive oil sector. The mission aimed to bring the IOC, the world's only intergovernmental organisation dedicated to olive oil and table olives, closer to this key producing country.

Minister Fernandes welcomed the IOC delegation, composed of **Jaime Lillo** and **Juan Antonio Polo**, Head of the Olive Oil Technology and Environment Department, at the Ministry of Agriculture in Lisbon on 9 September. The discussions focused on the challenges facing the sector, particularly regarding water resources, and on potential cooperation to adapt and enhance Portugal's olive oil production. Lillo took the opportunity to invite the Minister to the upcoming celebration of World Olive Day in November and expressed his intention to hold the session of the Council of Members scheduled for June 2026 in Portugal, which was warmly received by Minister Fernandes.



RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE IOC

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The IOC representatives then participated in a series of technical visits organised by the association Olivum, accompanied by Portuguese members of the IOC's Advisory Committee and other relevant stakeholders (10–11 September). These included Herdade do Figueirinha in Beja, where a comprehensive project for composting olive by-products was presented; "Olibest" in Serpa, a state-of-the-art facility integrating the entire value chain from agronomic support to production and marketing; and "Grupo DePrado" in Vendinha, the world's largest private olive oil producer, featuring cutting-edge technology and the highest industrial capacity in the sector. Finally, at Edia in Beja, discussions centred on the impact of the Alqueva irrigation project and the URSA initiative, which aims to promote a circular economy by valorising agricultural by-products.

The IOC also met with the Rector of the University of Évora, **Herminia Vasconcelos**, as well as other representatives of the University, with whom it will soon sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen cooperation between the two institutions. The IOC is also considering providing institutional support to the University's Master's in Olive Oil Technology.



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THE IOC STRENGTHENS ITS COOPERATION WITH CSIC

THE TWO INSTITUTIONS WILL COLLABORATE IN THE FIELDS OF TRAINING, RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The IOC, through its Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**, and the Spanish Higher Council for Scientific Research (**CSIC**), through its Vice-President for International Affairs, **Francisco Javier Moreno Fuentes**, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) setting out how the two institutions will work together to create synergies in activities relating to training, research and technical cooperation, as well as in activities implemented as part of bilateral and regional development projects.

CSIC and the IOC have maintained institutional relations for several years through frequent training activities, cooperation, experience sharing and exchange of information, as well as through contributing to the international debate on the importance of agriculture in general and olive growing in particular.

The two institutions consider research and training to be essential investments for the future, hence the need to place them at the heart of the strategy of olive oil-producing countries to promote growth and the creation of sustainable and inclusive jobs. Vocational and higher education is an essential component of human development, as it provides the high-level skills needed by experts in the olive sector. The MoU also underlines the central historical role of the olive tree, which plays a fundamental role in the economy, landscape, environmental protection and agricultural production of olive-growing countries and in the vitality of the rural areas where it is grown, as well as the health benefits of olive oil and its role as an essential staple of the Mediterranean diet.

The Spanish Higher Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) is the largest public research institution in Spain and one of the most recognised institutions in the European Research Area (ERA). Created almost 85 years ago, it is attached to the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.





THE IOC AND THE UNIVERSITY OF JAÉN ORGANISE AN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE OLIVE INDUSTRY'S BY-PRODUCTS

FROM 16 TO 20 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF JAÉN

The IOC and the University of Jaén have jointly organised a seminar on methods of valorising by-products and minimising waste from olive growing and finding alternative uses for them.

The very large number of applications received demonstrates the interest aroused by this issue. A total of 160 candidates from 26 countries, both IOC member and non-member countries, applied to the course. Candidates who applied to take part were from Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Egypt, Spain, France, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Montenegro, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Slovenia, Tunisia, Türkiye and Uruguay. The representatives of the two institutions finally selected 65 candidates: 25 in person and 40 online.





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Nicolás Ruiz Reyes, Rector of the University of Jaén; **Abderraouf Laajimi**, IOC Deputy Executive Director; and **Sebastián Sánchez**, Course Director, launched the seminar on the occasion of an inauguration ceremony on Monday 16 September. Also representing the IOC at the inauguration ceremony were **Lhassane Sikaoui** (Head of Olive Growing, Olive Technology, and Environment), **Catarina Bairrao** (Head of Technical Cooperation and Training), **Ayman Lekhbou** (IOC Intern), and **Akram Charfi** (IOC PhD Scholar).

IOC Deputy Executive Director **Abderraouf Laajimi** praised the University of Jaén for its ongoing support and collaboration, noting the importance of integrating environmental sustainability with the olive sector's economic and social aspects. He highlighted the sector's resilience and its role in adapting to climate change while enhancing quality and creating employment opportunities.

Rector **Nicolás Ruiz Reyes** expressed gratitude to the IOC for their trust and support, highlighting the University's pride in hosting the seminar with 65 participants from 19 countries. He emphasised the

seminar's key role in promoting more sustainable agricultural practices and reflected on the seminar's relevance to the region, where extra virgin olive oil is a vital part of local identity. He stressed the need for advanced practices to address environmental risks associated with agriculture and the importance of disseminating innovative technologies.

Course Director **Sebastián Sánchez** welcomed participants, reflecting on the seminar's extensive preparation and underscoring the significance of addressing both olive oil production and the potential value of by-products and residues. He emphasised the synergy between agriculture, the environment, and energy, aiming for a balanced approach to sustainability.

The seminar aims to deepen understanding of the challenges and innovations related to by-product management, production chain analysis, applicable legislation, and the profitability of sustainable practices. It aims to be a valuable opportunity for professional and personal growth, fostering advancements in both the economic and environmental aspects of the olive industry.



The University of Jaén, with whom the IOC maintains a longstanding cooperation, remains a leader in olive research and knowledge transfer, with nearly 130 research groups, alongside the work of the International Olive Oil and Olive Oil Research Institute (INUO), a benchmark institute for table olive and olive oil research, development and innovation advancements.



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THE IOC ANNOUNCES THE BEST EVOOS FROM THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE IN 2024!

THE MARIO SOLINAS QUALITY AWARDS RECOGNISES OILS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR THEIR EXTRAORDINARY QUALITY AND SENSORY ATTRIBUTES



The IOC has published the list of winners and finalists of the 1st edition of the Mario Solinas Quality Awards for extra virgin olive oils (EVOOs) from the Southern Hemisphere. This year, the world's most prestigious international and institutional EVOO quality competition received 26 samples from 4 countries. The winning and finalist oils were judged by an international jury composed of several heads of IOC-recognised tasting panels, which met on 11 and 12 September at the Sensory Evaluation Laboratory of the School of Chemistry, Universidad de la República (UdelaR), in Montevideo. The jury members (see photo) used the IOC-Panel platform designed by the [Fundación del Olivar](#) during their tasting sessions. The results of this year's Mario Solinas Quality Awards for Southern Hemisphere EVOOs are available here in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

The Mario Solinas Quality Awards, which have been running since the 2000/2001 crop year, are aimed at improving the production quality of EVOOs all around the world. The competition encourages individual producers, producer associations and packers in producing countries to market EVOOs that display harmonious organoleptic characteristics. It also seeks to enhance consumer awareness regarding this unique product, encouraging them to recognise and appreciate the



sensory attributes of these high-quality olive oils. This year, and for the first time ever, the IOC launched the first edition of the Mario Solinas Quality Awards for Southern Hemisphere countries in collaboration with Uruguay.

The awards ceremony will be celebrated in Montevideo (Uruguay) on Thursday 7 November, 2024, in the framework of the upcoming event institutionally sponsored by the IOC entitled "Second Latin American Congress on Olive Oil (CLAO2024)" which will be held on the 8th and 9th of November, 2024.

The IOC wishes to take this opportunity to thank all producers who participated in the first edition of the IOC Mario Solinas Quality Awards in the Southern Hemisphere. We look forward to your participation next year as well!



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EFFORTS TOWARDS HARMONISING RECOGNISED OLIVE OIL TASTING PANELS CONTINUE

THE IOC CONVENES THE 5TH HARMONISATION WORKSHOP FOR RECOGNISED VIRGIN OLIVE OIL TASTING PANELS



The fifth edition of the annual workshop for the harmonisation of IOC-recognised virgin olive oil tasting panels took place online from 17 to 19 September, 2024. The main goal of this activity is to reduce the deviation between olive oil tasting panels across the world, as well as to encourage the continuous training of panel members. In this fifth edition, 112 panel leaders from 29 IOC member and non-member countries evaluated over 30 virgin olive oil samples from several countries.

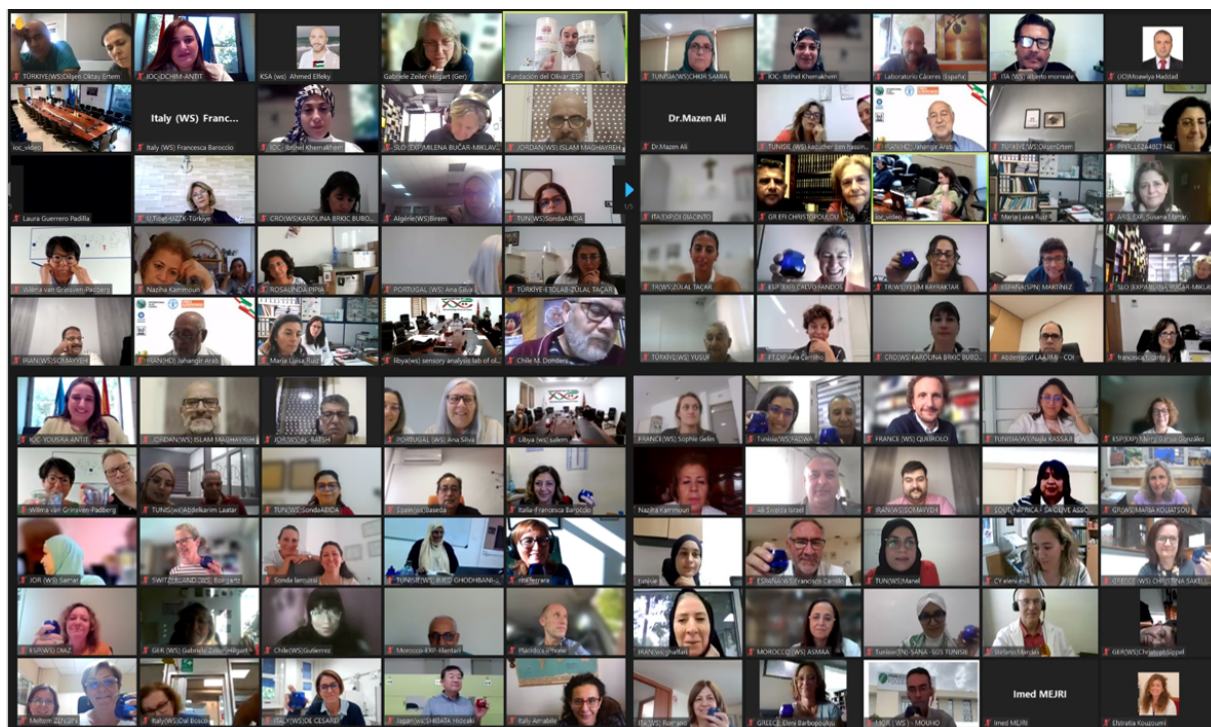
The workshop was organised by the IOC's Standardisation and Research Unit and led by six IOC experts in the organoleptic assessment of olive oils, namely: **Karolina Brkić Bubola, Milena Bučar Miklavčič, Ana Carrilho, Susana Mattar Sabio, Angels Calvo Fandos, and Placido Pascual Morales.**

Virgin olive oil samples were sent to the tasting panels registered for the activity in July of 2024, along with instructions for their appropriate storage. Over the three-day harmonisation workshop, the tasters registered sample data on the IOC Panel platform, an essential tool provided by the Fundación del Olivar (FO) to facilitate the real-time statistical analysis of results and the harmonisation of tasting panels. To this end, they also used the profile sheet from the Mario Solinas Quality Awards, the IOC's international competition for the quality of extra virgin olive oils.



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IOC Deputy Executive Director for Operational Affairs, **Abderraouf Laajimi**, highlighted the importance of this annual activity aimed at aligning virgin olive oil tasting panels globally, and reminded participants of the IOC's continuous efforts to enhance the competence of tasting panels and provide key training to panel members.

The workshop also welcomed a presentation on the statistical use of sensory analysis data, given by **Luis Guerro Asorey**, Senior Researcher on Food Quality and Technology at the Institute of Agrifood Research and Technology (**IRTA**), and a brief training on how to use the IOC Panel platform delivered by Miguel Ángel Romera Ortega, FO representative.

The sixth harmonisation workshop for IOC-recognised olive oil tasting panels is scheduled for September 2025.



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THE IOC AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "OLIVE OIL FOR PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"

CELEBRATING THE OLIVE TREE AS A SYMBOL OF PEACE

To commemorate this year's International Peace Day, celebrated annually on 21 September, the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (CIHEAM Zaragoza), a longstanding partner of the IOC, organised the International Conference on "Olive Oil for Peace and Sustainable Development" with the support of the University of Zaragoza. The conference highlighted olive oil's contribution to local development across the Mediterranean and beyond, as well as its role as a symbol of peace, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the [Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace](#).

The event gathered representatives from the public and private sectors, including government officials, intergovernmental organisations, universities, cooperatives, companies, and social leaders, to examine the role of cooperation in ensuring that olive oil production supports sustainable development. Discussions focused on production techniques, management strategies, and agri-food cooperation initiatives aimed at promoting a culture of peace.

The conference was opened by **Raúl Compés**, Director of CIHEAM Zaragoza. On this occasion, the IOC was represented by its Deputy Executive Director **Abderraouf Laajimi** who participated in the roundtable on "Institutional support for the promotion of olive growing". In his intervention, he highlighted the specific measures that governmental institutions could take to support the modernisation and sustainability of olive cultivation. He also emphasised the importance of adopting policies that would improve the competitive potential of olive oil in the international market.



Juan Antonio Polo, Head of the Olive Technology and Environment Department, highlighted the environmental and social importance of olive growing in the Mediterranean. He noted that the UN identifies "carbon farming" as key to meeting 2050 climate neutrality goals. Olive groves, serving as permanent CO₂ sinks, provide essential ecosystem services that should be recognised and potentially monetised. In 2024, the IOC launched a project to develop a scheme for calculating the carbon balance of olive groves and generating voluntary carbon credits for farmers.

You can read the conference programme [here](#).

The olive tree has long been a symbol of peace, dating back to ancient civilizations. In fact, the United Nations emblem displays an olive branch, reinforcing this important crop's association with global peace. It is symbol of unity, understanding and cooperation for civilisations of the Mediterranean and elsewhere.



TOWARDS FURTHER RECOGNISING THE HEALTH PROPERTIES OF OLIVE OILS

2ND CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION AND HEALTH LABELLING OF EVOOS IN THE EU



The Spanish extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) sector gathered in Cordoba on Tuesday 24 September for the “2nd Conference on Nutrition and Health Labelling of EVOOs” organised by QvExtra!, an association promoting the quality of EVOOs and partner of the IOC.

The goal of the conference was to present the status of the technical dossier submitted by the association to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) which seeks to achieve, for the first time, a health claim for virgin olive oils regarding the disease risk reduction. It brought together over 100 attendees from the olive oil sector, ranging from farmers and producers to representatives from governmental institutions and international organisations.

The conference opened with presentations from Soledad Serrano, QvExtra! President, **Salvador Fuentes**, President of the Provincial Council of Cordoba, and the IOC’s Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**. Lillo highlighted the importance of enhancing

consumers’ knowledge about the countless health benefits of olive oil and welcomed QvExtra!’s efforts towards establishing guidelines for defending the nutritional and health properties of EVOOs. He recalled that the [first conference](#) on nutrition and health labelling of EVOOs took place at the IOC’s headquarters, and reaffirmed the international organisation’s support of this important initiative. The event followed with a series of presentations relating to EFSA’s labelling guidelines and the importance of promoting olive oil’s benefits for human health.

QvExtra! is an international association that promotes and certifies the quality of extra virgin olive oils, ensuring that producers adhere to strict standards and guidelines for excellence. It brings together olive oil producers who are committed to maintaining high quality and transparency in their products. Earlier this year, the association received [a grant from the IOC](#) within the framework of its grant scheme for promoting the health benefits of EVOOs.



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“DIALOGUES ON THE FUTURE”: THE AUSTRALIAN OLIVE OIL SECTOR

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE IOC AND NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

Within the framework of the “Dialogues for the Future” initiative launched by the IOC earlier this year in California, Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** and the Head of the Standardisation and Research Unit, **Mercedes Fernández**, travelled to Australia in September 2024.

The initiative’s aim is to bring non-IOC member countries that are producers, importers and consumers of olive oil and table olives closer to the world’s only intergovernmental organisation dedicated to these unique products. The IOC’s visit also falls in line with the promotional campaign launched by the Organisation in Australia in 2022. On the occasion of the visit, the IOC executives met with a variety of key olive oil stakeholders in Australia. They were invited to a presentation from Jaime Lillo in Canberra during which he highlighted the main challenges of the global olive sector and the importance of facing them together, as well as shedding light on the many benefits for Australia of joining the IOC. This chapter of the “Dialogues on the Future” provided an enriching opportunity for the Australian olive oil sector to understand challenges and leverage the opportunities ahead. The IOC’s mission in Australia also included a visit to Cobram Estate, the main Australian producer of olive oil.



Olive oil production in Australia is estimated at around 19 000 tonnes per crop year. On average, more than 32 000 tonnes are imported per crop year, of which 92% come from European Union countries. Average consumption is around 48 000 tonnes which means a consumption of 1.9 kilos of olive oil per inhabitant.



INAUGURAL LECTURE ON THE STATUS OF GLOBAL OLIVE CULTIVATION

XVI ADVANCED COURSE IN OLIVE CULTIVATION



The Advanced Course in Olive Cultivation is now on its sixteenth edition. The course, organised by the Andalusian Institute of Agricultural, Fisheries, Food, and Sustainable Production (IFAPA by its Spanish acronym), runs from 23 September to 18 October at IFAPA's headquarters in Cordoba (Spain). It seeks to improve the qualifications of olive sector professionals by discussing scientific foundations and advanced cultivation techniques, while serving as a forum for the exchange of information and experiences among participants, as well as the promotion of scientific and technical cooperation.

IOC Deputy Executive Director for Operational Affairs, **Abderraouf Laajimi**, gave the inaugural lecture on the status of global olive cultivation on Monday 23 September at IFAPA's headquarters. He highlighted the impact of recent climatic conditions in the Mediterranean, particularly in the Iberian Peninsula, which led to two unprecedented production declines and a surge in prices, slowing global olive oil

consumption. This demonstrates that climate change is a major challenge for the sector. However, olive groves can act as a significant carbon sink, capturing CO₂ and storing it in a stable manner. Additionally, producing high-quality olive oil remains a priority due to its health benefits. In this line of thought, he recalled that the IOC aims to support global olive oil trade by ensuring quality and safety, contributing to better health for consumers and the planet.

The Advanced Course in Olive Cultivation is aimed at twenty-five professionals from the olive sector with experience in technical or managerial positions, as well as university graduates with an interest in the olive sector. Over the course of four weeks, the students will touch on a variety of topics, ranging from genetic improvement programmes and soil management systems to the utilization of by-products and the use of diverse machineries for harvesting.

Click here to read the [course programme](#).



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ENHANCING THE ORGANOLEPTIC ASSESSMENT OF VIRGIN OLIVE OILS

THE IOC'S STANDARDISATION AND RESEARCH UNIT GATHERS ITS EXPERTS

The IOC's Executive Secretariat is committed to achieving consistency in national and international legislation regarding the physico-chemical and organoleptic characteristics of olive oils and table

olives. In this context, the Standardisation and Research Unit held its biannual virtual meeting with experts and advisors in organoleptic assessment of virgin olive oils on 25 and 26 September.



Over thirty-five specialists—officially designated by IOC member countries, most of whom are panel leaders of IOC-recognised virgin olive oil tasting panels—reviewed the latest revisions of the [organoleptic assessment method](#) for virgin olive oils, resolutions approved at the last Council of Members meeting, ongoing studies, and future priorities. Discussions covered various topics, including taster training, reference materials,

accreditation, borderline olive oils, the results of the IOC's proficiency test for laboratory recognition from December 2024 to November 2025, and findings from studies on the characteristics and volatile profiles of ripe Picual and *Chemlali* olive oils. They also reviewed the conclusions from the [fifth workshop](#) for the harmonisation of IOC-recognised tasting panels, which occurred earlier that month.



21ST EDITION OF THE UNIVERSITY TITLE IN VIRGIN OLIVE OIL TASTING

THE COURSE WILL RUN FROM 25 SEPTEMBER TO 19 DECEMBER 2024



Last week, the University of Jaén (UJA), a key IOC partner, inaugurated the 21st edition of the University Title in Virgin Olive Oil Tasting. This edition welcomes thirty students, supported by IOC scholarships, from twelve IOC member countries: Algeria, Argentina, Egypt, Greece, Iran, Israel, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, and Türkiye. The programme, which has been running since the 1997/98 academic year, immerses participants in the world of olive oil, providing them with a comprehensive understanding of the entire life cycle of this unique product, from farm to table.

The richness of the course's content was emphasised by **Catarina Bairrao Balula**, Head of the IOC's Technical Cooperation and Training Department, during the inauguration ceremony of this 21st edition last Friday, 26 September, at the UJA headquarters. Accompanied by the Vice-Rector for Strategy and Digital University, **Juan Martínez**, the Course Director, **Sebastián Sánchez**, as well as the Technical Director, **Marino Úceda** and the Coordinator, **Alberto Moya**, the IOC representative commended the University for its ongoing efforts. She highlighted the importance of the course in bringing together olive oil enthusiasts from around the world for a three-month intensive programme that will deepen their knowledge of olive oil and promote the sharing of experiences and intercultural dialogue.



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Director **Sánchez** thanked the IOC for its ongoing support, highlighting that the course encompasses all aspects of the olive oil production chain, from tree to consumer. He emphasised that a good taster must understand both the olive grove and mill levels, with training consisting of technical classes and visits to production areas, including olive groves, harvests, mills, and research centres.

Vice-Rector **Martínez** also expressed gratitude, particularly to the IOC and the Course Directors, noting that over 600 participants have attended the training, which has become an international benchmark due to the UJA's focus on the olive sector and the IOC's support.

You can read the programme of the 21st edition of the University Title in Virgin Olive Oil Tasting [here](#).



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THE IOC TAKES PART IN THE INAUGURATION OF AN ORGANOLEPTIC ASSESSMENT COURSE FOR VIRGIN OLIVE OIL IN PORTO ALEGRE (BRAZIL)

THE COURSE, AIMED AT HEADS OF PANELS, RECEIVED THE IOC'S INSTITUTIONAL PATRONAGE

From 7 to 11 October 2024, the city of Porto Alegre, capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, will host an organoleptic assessment course for virgin olive oil patronaged by the IOC in accordance with the provisions of document COI/T.30-3/Doc. No. 1 "Guidelines for the institutional patronage of organoleptic assessment courses for virgin olive oils".

Organised by the *Laboratório Federal de Defesa Agropecuária* (LFDA-RS) under the aegis of the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture, the course aims to provide its 18 participants with the knowledge and skills they need to carry out rigorous, standardised assessments of virgin olive oils, in accordance with IOC [methods, standards and guides](#).

The inaugural session, which took place on 7 October 2024, was attended by **Abderraouf Laajimi**, Deputy Executive Director of the IOC, who gave a speech on the structure and missions of the IOC, and the Head of the Standardisation and Research Unit, **Mercedes Fernández Albaladejo**, who explained the standards developed by the IOC with the help of its experts.

The main objectives of this course are to strengthen





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local skills and to promote the dissemination of IOC standards and methods, thereby contributing to improving the quality of virgin olive oils produced in Brazil, preventing fraud and protecting consumers. The IOC-Panel platform provided by *Fundación del Olivar* will be used during this course to process participants' results in real time and ensure better training.

The IOC-patronaged event is organised by local institutions, including the CGQV/DIPOV/SDA/MAPA, represented by **Helena Pan Rugeri**, general coordinator of plant quality, and **Fabiano Barreto**, coordinator of the LFDA-RS laboratory.

At the opening ceremony, the **IOC's Deputy Executive Director** pointed out that "standardisation and training of tasters are essential to guarantee the quality of the olive oils produced", before thanking Brazil and the organisers for this initiative.

This programme is fully in line with the IOC's objectives in terms of standardisation and research, offering a concrete example of international cooperation in support of the sustainable development of the olive sector.

The course coincides with the launch, at the end of the month, of the new promotional campaign that the Organisation will be running until 2027 in this country, where olive oil consumption, boosted by a growing middle class and increased awareness of its health benefits, is booming. Brazil is now one of the world's biggest importers of olive oil, after the United States and the European Union, accounting for around 8% of global olive oil exports. The main aim of the campaign is to promote Brazil's integration into the IOC, raise awareness of the Organisation's standards and provide training opportunities for industry players through practical sessions and networking.



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OLIVUM TALKS 2024: PROMOTING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN THE PORTUGUESE OLIVE SECTOR

THE IOC CONFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO MORE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN OLIVE OIL PRODUCTION

On 3 October 2024, the Polytechnic Institute of Beja (Alentejo, Portugal) hosted the OLIVUM TALKS event organised by **Olivum**, a Portuguese association of olive growers and olive oil producers. The event brought

together more than 250 participants, including producers, oil mill managers, public institutions and research centres, to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the olive oil sector.

11ª EDIÇÃO
olivum TALKS
03.OUT.2024
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE BEJA
Auditório - Edifício da Presidência

ABERTURA

Pedro Lopes
Presidente da Direção - Olivum

Paulo Arsénio
Presidente da Câmara Municipal de Beja

11ª EDIÇÃO
olivum TALKS
03.OUT.2024
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE BEJA
Auditório - Edifício da Presidência

AZEITE: Tendências de Mercado, Preços e Consumo

Keynote Speaker

Francisco Gomes da Silva
AGROCEA, Director Geral

Pedro Brinca
Novo SIC, Associate Professor

Carlos Jimenez
ACCESSUR, Director de Operações

Ricardo Costa
Gallo WWL, Vice President Global Procurement & Buying

Mariana Matos
Casa do Alentejo, Secretária-geral

MODERADOR
José Diogo Albuquerque
Agropolita, CEO

11ª EDIÇÃO
olivum TALKS
03.OUT.2024
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE BEJA
Auditório - Edifício da Presidência

PEPAC Investimento

Nuno Mungo
C&A, Coordenador de Área de Investimentos - Dep. Turismo

11ª EDIÇÃO
olivum TALKS
03.OUT.2024
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE BEJA
Auditório - Edifício da Presidência

OLIVAL e LAGAR: Valorização de Subprodutos

Keynote Speaker

Juan Antonio Palencia
C&A, Chief Representative of Investments - C&A de Beja

Ana Cristina Carrola
ATA, Head of Innovation Projects

Inês Viana
L&L, Head of Innovation - research projects

José António Cal Horta
Andra, Lead Producer - Olive Growers

MODERADOR
Susana Sampaio
Dep. Turismo

11ª EDIÇÃO
olivum TALKS
03.OUT.2024
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE BEJA
Auditório - Edifício da Presidência

ENCERRAMENTO

Salvador Malheiro
Presidente do Conselho de Administração - Energia



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Over the course of the day, national and international experts analysed market trends, the future of the sector in Portugal and the use of by-products from olive groves and oil mills. At a round table discussion moderated by the association's Executive Director, **Susana Sassetti**, sustainable alternatives for using these by-products were presented, and the importance of managing them to ensure the sector's growth was highlighted.

The IOC was represented at the event by **Juan Antonio Polo Palomino**, Head of the IOC's Olive Oil Production and Environment Department, who outlined his vision of a circular economy for the sector and stressed the importance of valorising the by-products of olive oil production.

The IOC official pointed out that the Organisation's objective was to encourage more sustainable use of resources in order to minimise waste and maximise environmental and economic benefits. He said that the olive oil industry was a perfect example of how the circular economy could be applied effectively. "All by-products generated along the value chain, from the olive grove to the oil mill, have potential for use and recovery. The real challenge is to make these solutions technically and economically viable," he concluded.

Several agronomic applications offer viable solutions for managing these by-products, including compost, which can be used as an organic soil improver, and olive mill wastewater, which can be an excellent complement to fertirrigation. Incorporating organic matter from olive pruning and weeding residues into the soil also helps to improve soil health. Biochar, could also be very useful for retaining nutrients and improving the soil. Another fundamental aspect that must not be overlooked in efforts to increase production is the management of pomace and by-products. Each kilogram of oil produced results in an increased capacity to manage four kilograms of pomace. is therefore essential to find effective ways of managing and adding value to these by-products to ensure sustainable growth in the sector.



Finally, the use of by-products for energy purposes, such as the production of bioethanol and biogas, is seen as one of the most promising long-term solutions, as it not only reduces waste but also contributes to the transition to cleaner, more sustainable energy sources.

The event strengthened the dialogue between key Portuguese sector stakeholders and confirmed the IOC's commitment to more sustainable practices in olive oil production.

For more information, visit the official website of Olivum.



MEETINGS OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT



THE IOC AND SOUTH AFRICA STRENGTHEN TIES

BILATERAL MEETING BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND SOUTH AFRICA'S AMBASSADOR TO SPAIN

IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** welcomed South Africa's Ambassador in Madrid, **Sankie Dolly Mthembu-Mahanyele**, at the IOC's headquarters on Wednesday 9 October. The bilateral meeting was an opportunity for both representatives to take stock of the world olive sector, challenges and opportunities ahead, and to strengthen the ties between the intergovernmental organisation and South Africa. **Lillo** took the opportunity to invite the Ambassador to participate as an observer in the upcoming meeting of the Advisory Committee and the 120th plenary session of the Council of Members, on 19 and 20 November respectively, and also extended an invitation to the celebration of World Olive Day on 21 November. The Ambassador welcomed the invitations and reaffirmed South Africa's interest in coming closer to the IOC.

South Africa's olive sector is expanding steadily. The area of olive groves used for olive oil production is increasing considerably each season, with an estimated olive oil production of over 1,500 tonnes. South Africa imports around 6000 tonnes of olive oil per season with Spain and Italy being its main suppliers.





THE IOC WELCOMES A DELEGATION OF CHINESE COMPANIES AND INSTITUTIONS

TOWARDS A STRENGTHENED COOPERATION BETWEEN CHINA AND THE IOC



A delegation of representatives from various Chinese companies and institutions, led by Mr **Deng Yu**, Director of the Longnan Olive Oil Research Centre, and Mr **Robert Woo**, President of the Olive Oil Life Association / Beijing Regalland Convention Exhibition Co. Ltd, visited the headquarters of the IOC in Madrid on September 6th.

The delegation was received by the Executive Director of the intergovernmental organisation dedicated to olive oil and table olives, **Jaime Lillo**, who was accompanied by Maria Juarez, Head of the Economy and Promotion Unit; **Catarina Bairrao**, Head of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department; and **Francisco Javier Larraona**, Head of the Observatory and Information Systems Department. **Mercedes Fernández**, Head of the Research and Standardisation Unit, joined the meeting by videoconference.

The Chinese delegation presented Mr Lillo with a copy of the World Catalogue of Olive Tree Varieties translated into Chinese, as well as a technical copy.



MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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Following the presentations, Mr Lillo explained the mission and activities of the IOC with a focus on the evolution of China's olive oil imports. He pointed out that the Asian country was now one of the world's main importers of olive oil, accounting for 4% of global imports. As for Mr Deng Yu, he commented that the outlook for olive oil consumption in his country was very promising, with consumption increasing by an average of 7% per year, and that the Chinese population was showing a growing interest in olive products' unique health properties. With the olive tree having been introduced to China 60 years ago, today almost 120,000 hectares of olive trees of 157 varieties are grown there, producing an average of 90,000 tonnes of olives a year. The country has around fifty oil mills, producing an average of 11,000 tonnes of olive oil per year, and even has its own national olive germplasm bank.

The Chinese delegation was particularly interested in the steps to be taken to enable China to join the international organisation and the IOC's recognition of laboratories and tasting panels. China currently has one laboratory for the physico-chemical analysis of olive oils and one IOC-recognised tasting panel. With an active olive sector, China has boosted efforts over several years to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with producers, universities and research centres in IOC member olive-growing countries.

The Longnan region, in Gansu province, is now a major olive oil production area. Over the last few years, the IOC has carried out several [promotional campaigns](#) in the country.



FUTURE ACTIVITIES



120TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF MEMBERS OF THE IOC

OFFICIAL DATES OF THE UPCOMING 120TH SESSION OF THE IOC'S COUNCIL OF MEMBERS



The dates for the 120th session of the IOC Council of Members were recently approved by Council Chairman **Javad Mirarab**. The specialized committees will meet on November 12, 13 and 14 by videoconference. The meeting of the Advisory Committee on Olive Oil and Table Olives will be held on November 19, the day before the plenary session of the Council of Members (November 20). The Executive Secretariat is currently preparing for World Olive Day, which will be celebrated exceptionally this year on November 21 (the official date is November 26) to ensure the participation of all Council representatives on this day. More details to follow!



**Advisory Committee
for Olive Oil and Table Olives**



THE IOC IS PREPARING TO CELEBRATE WORLD OLIVE DAY 2024

THE IOC WILL COMMEMORATE THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET PYRAMID

In November 2024, the IOC will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the official publication of the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid in the margins of World Olive Day. The IOC would like to recognize the people and organizations that pioneered this initiative, as well as the impact this work has had on the preservation and advancement of this Mediterranean cultural heritage for the benefit of the health of humanity.

Many of the leading scientists in health and the Mediterranean Diet, true eminences of science and knowledge, are still active and making a decisive contribution to promoting human and planetary health. In a world facing the challenge of feeding a growing global population in a healthy and sustainable way, the Mediterranean Diet - with olive oil as an essential ingredient - is more relevant than ever.

The IOC is celebrating World Olive Day on Thursday, November 21, to recognize the indispensable contributions of the olive tree and to promote the spreading of knowledge and understanding of the importance and benefits of the Mediterranean Diet.

The Mediterranean Diet, traditional to the olive-growing areas of the Mediterranean Sea, is one of the healthiest eating habits in the world. Olive oil is an essential part that facilitates the increased incorporation of vegetables and other plant-sourced foods in dietary patterns, providing health benefits that are recognized by numerous scientific studies. These include reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, the ability to improve brain

health, providing essential antioxidants that fight cellular aging, and the prevention of certain cancers.

Although this diet has a millennia-old tradition, it was not properly recognized until a group of leading nutrition scientists, public health experts, food and cultural scholars began to investigate the patterns of the traditional Mediterranean Diet circa 1960. These efforts, building on the earlier pioneering work of Professor Ancel Keys and his 'Seven Countries Study' and led by world-renowned institutions such as the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health—Department of Nutrition and the World Health Organization in collaboration with Oldways Preservation & Exchange Trust, culminated in a series of conferences and papers that established the "Healthy Traditional Mediterranean Diet Pyramid," recognized worldwide.

This group of experts developed and presented the International Conference on Mediterranean Diets in 1993, a follow-up conference in 1994 and a series of scientific articles published in special issues of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition in 1995 and 1997, which awakened international interest in this culturally rooted, plant-forward nutritional pattern, changing the course of global nutrition research and public health orientations.

We will provide you with more information in the coming weeks to present the final program for this day and the speakers invited by the IOC to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Mediterranean food pyramid, in which olive oil and table olives play such an important role.



THE IOC PREPARES TO LAUNCH A PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN IN BRAZIL

The year 2024 marks the start of a new promotional campaign in Brazil, which is due to run until 2027. For several months, the IOC has been in contact with representatives of the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture and the Brazilian Embassy in Spain to better understand the needs of this country and to design an effective campaign to convince Brazil to accede the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives and to join the producer and consumer countries that are already members of the international organisation.

The Executive Director of the IOC and the Head of the Organisation's Economics and Promotion Unit will shortly be travelling to Brazil to launch the new campaign. The main activities of this first year of the campaign are as follows:

- Training of tasting panels
- Meetings with producers in the Rio Grande do Sul region
- Meetings with government representatives in Brasilia

Training of tasting panels

A training course will be held in Sao Paulo from 28 October to 1 November. It will be aimed at a group of 20 to 30 members of olive oil tasting panels, in response to the need expressed by the Brazilian authorities to encourage the creation of more IOC-recognised tasting panels in Brazil. The participants were selected in collaboration with the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture. The aim of the event is to strengthen links between industry stake-

holders and the IOC, raise awareness of the IOC Trade Standard, promote the image of olive oil through sensory experiences and tasting sessions, and help stakeholders prevent fraud.

A cocktail reception will be held at the end of the course, during which the IOC Executive Director will address the participants and encourage exchanges and discussions with a view to fruitful collaboration.

Meetings with producers in the Rio Grande do Sul region

The Rio Grande do Sul region, which accounts for around 80% of the country's olive oil production, was recently hit by heavy flooding. IOC officials will visit several olive groves and production sites. The Executive Director will personally address the olive-growing community to raise awareness of the IOC's activities and standards, and to encourage producers to improve the quality, authenticity and sustainability of olive products.

Meetings with government representatives in Brasilia

The third pillar of the campaign will be a visit by IOC representatives to the capital, where they will meet with authorities from various ministries (Agriculture, Finance and External Relations) to present the IOC's work to them in person. They will also meet with representatives of the embassies of the main importing countries that are members of the IOC, to explain the campaign programme and gather their opinions.



PUBLICATIONS AND NETWORKS

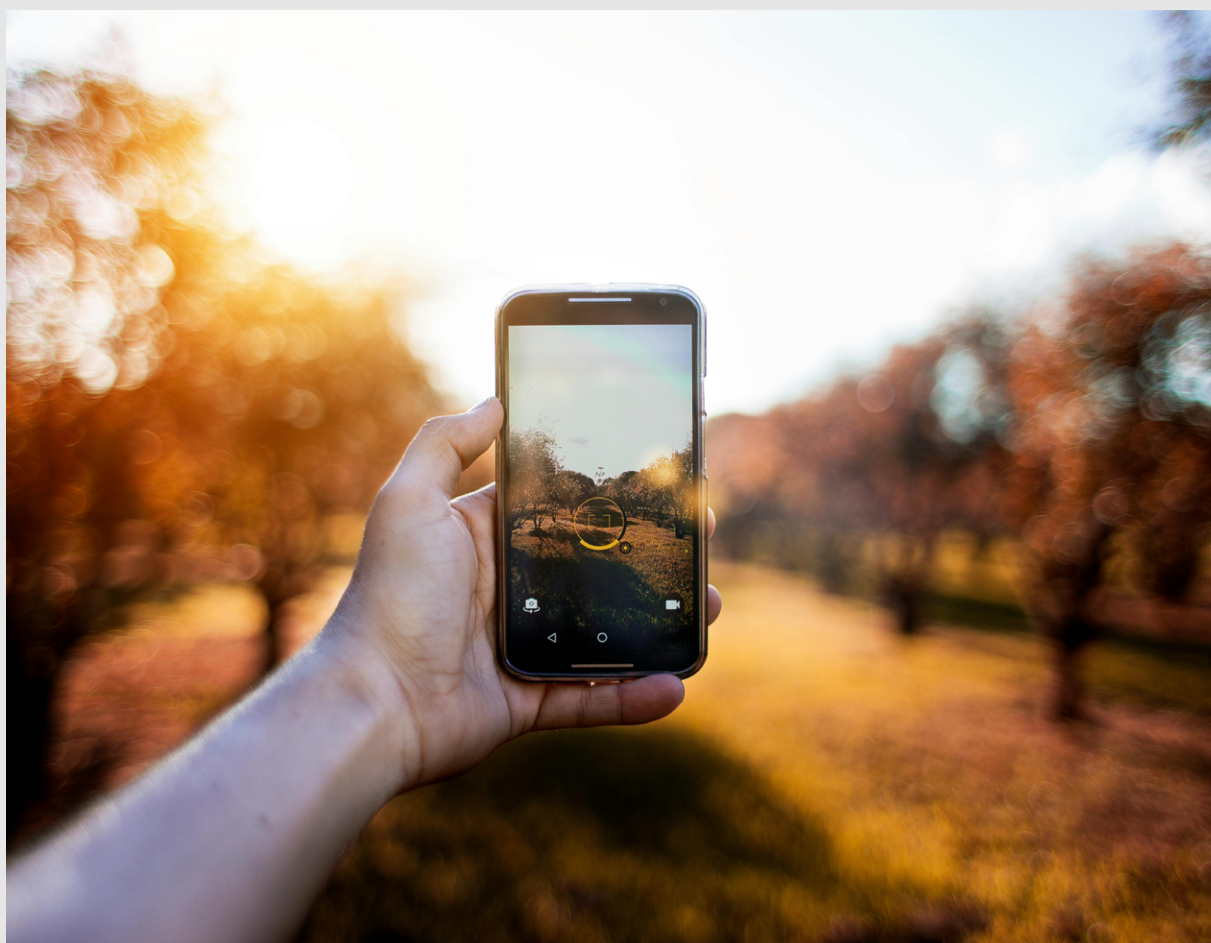


PUBLICATIONS AND NETWORKS

FOLLOW US THROUGH OUR NETWORKS!

Many of you are already following us on social media, through the IOC press review, OLIVE NEWS (<http://www.scoop.it/t/olive-news>), where the latest news from the international olive sector and other articles on topics of interest such as the Mediterranean diet, health, etc., are collected and published in Spanish, English, French, and Italian. This press review is updated daily. Since its launch in December 2013, more than 12,700 articles have

been collected in this press review, which has more than 9,700 subscribers and has already received over 383,000 visits. All 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) followed by more than 10,500 people. Don't wait longer to subscribe and stay tuned with the olive world!





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/>

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