



IOC

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THE IOC PURSUES ITS ACTIVITIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 Recent activities at the IOC

- 4 Presentation of the Olive Oil World Congress at the IOC headquarters
- 5 The IOC announces this year's best EVOOs (northern hemisphere)
- 6 IOC Executive Director at the presentation of the Peralisi-UJA chair
- 7 IOC experts deliberate on nutritional advancements
- 8 The IOC at a technical conference on olive groves and the carbon credit market
- 9 The IOC co-organizes a course on olive tree pest and disease control in Iran
- 10 The IOC participates in the World Olive Oil Exhibition
- 11 The IOC at LIFE Agromitiga's results presentation
- 12 IOC mission to Slovenia
- 14 The IOC joins in celebrating International Women's Day

15 Announcements and future activities

- 16 Agenda 2024
- 16 A seminar on the valorization of olive by-products and waste minimization
- 17 The IOC offers scholarships to students of the International Expert Course in virgin olive oil tasting

18 Meetings of the Executive Secretariat

- 19 The IOC and the USA strengthen their ties
- 19 Türkiye and the IOC strengthen ties
- 20 The IOC welcomes *Grandes Pagos del Olivar*
- 21 Jaime Lillo, guest of honor at the 2024 Olio Officina Festival

22 Publications and Social Networks

- 23 The latest OLIVÆ edition is now available online

24 World Market of olive oil and table olives

- 25 United States - Olive oil imports
- 28 World trade in olive oil and table olives
- 29 Producer prices - Olive oils



RECENT ACTIVITIES
AT THE IOC



PRESENTATION OF THE OLIVE OIL WORLD CONGRESS AT THE IOC HEADQUARTERS

THE EVENT WAS ATTENDED IN-PERSON AND ONLINE BY THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY

On Wednesday 28 February, the IOC presented the **Olive Oil World Congress** (OOWC) at its headquarters in Madrid. The OOWC will take place for the first time in June, bringing together a diversity of stakeholders of the olive oil sector to discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead. The presentation was attended in-person and online by several ambassadors and diplomatic representatives of both IOC member and observer countries, including the ambassadors of Tunisia, Iran and South Africa to Spain, who expressed their support to the upcoming forum.

The event was opened by **Jaime Lillo**, IOC Executive Director, who highlighted that the OOWC will serve to boost the olive oil and table olive sector through the exchange of knowledge at the international level. He expressed his gratitude to **H.M. King Felipe VI**, President of the OOWC's Honorary Committee. **Antonio Rodríguez de Liévana**, Deputy Director General for International Relations and Community Affairs at the Spanish Agricultural Ministry, and **Ricardo Migueláñez**, OOWC General Coordinator, also intervened on the occasion, emphasizing the importance that the millennial olive sector has for Spain.

The first edition of the OOWC is scheduled from 26 to 28 June in the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC)'s auditorium in Madrid. It is expected to bring together a diversity of stakeholders of the olive sector from more than 50 countries. Its aim is to address 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.



THE IOC ANNOUNCES THIS YEAR'S BEST EVOOS (NORTHERN HEMISPHERE)

THE MARIO SOLINAS QUALITY AWARD RECOGNIZES 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 **24th edition** of the [Mario Solinas Quality Award for extra virgin olive oils](#) (EVOOs) from the northern hemisphere. This

year, the world's most prestigious non-for-profit EVOO competition, received **113 samples** from **10 countries**. The winning and finalist oils were judged

by an **international jury** composed of several heads of IOC-recognized tasting panels. The jury met from Tuesday 5 to Friday 8 March at the IOC headquarters in Madrid to taste and select the winning and runner-up oils, using the **IOC-Panel** platform designed by the [Fundación del Olivar](#).



The Mario Solinas Quality Award, which has been running since the 2000/2001 crop year, is 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 recognize and appreciate the sensory attributes of these high-quality olive oils. Its name pays tribute to Italian professor Mario Solinas, one of the greatest advocates of the sensory analysis of virgin olive oils. This year, for the first time, the IOC has launched a special edition for EVOOs from the southern hemisphere, to be held in Uruguay.

The awards ceremony will be celebrated in the framework of the upcoming **119th session of the IOC's Council of Members** in June 2024 (date and venue TBD).

The IOC wishes to take this opportunity to thank all producers, producer associations and packers who participated in the 24th edition of the IOC **Mario Solinas Quality Award**.





IOC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE PIERALISI-UJA CHAIR

UJA HAS LAUNCHED A NEW CHAIR ON HISTORIC AND ECONOMIC STUDIES OF THE OLIVE INDUSTRY

On Wednesday 13 March, the IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** travelled to Jaén for the inauguration event of the **University of Jaén's** (UJA) new **Chair on Historic and Economic Studies of the Olive Industry**. For the occasion, UJA organized a seminar under the title "Historical analysis of agri-food cooperatives in the province of Jaén: factors that boosted the birth of cooperativism and its modernization". **Jaime Lillo** kicked off the event with a presentation centred around the IOC's history, from its establishment under the United Nations up to today. He congratulated the UJA for its role as the international reference in the field of research in the olive sector, and highlighted the importance of collaboration between public and private entities for advancing knowledge. Lillo also issued a message to producers urging them to prioritize value generation amidst sector uncertainty. He emphasized that focusing on high-quality olive oil production is the key to meeting the rising global demand for olive oils.



In the framework of the event, Lillo met with UJA's Rector, **Nicolás Ruiz**, to expand the scope and impact of the activities that the IOC and UJA organize jointly. The UJA is one of the IOC's longtime partners. Both institutions collaborate on a number of activities related to the olive sector, such as the seminar on the "[Sustainable valorization of by-products and waste minimization in the olive industry](#)" and the "[International Expert Course in Olive Oil Tasting](#)" (see the articles devoted to these two courses on the following pages of this Newsletter).



The IOC's Executive Director also met with **Francisco Reyes**, President of the Provincial Government of Jaén, and visited the installations of local producers and cooperatives.



IOC EXPERTS DELIBERATE ON NUTRITIONAL ADVANCEMENTS

OLIVE OIL IS EXTRAORDINARILY RICH IN HEALTH BENEFITS



The IOC Executive Secretariat recently convened the Organization's **scientific committee of nutrition experts** on Tuesday, February 27, 2024. Studying and disseminating the countless health benefits of olive oil – the healthiest calories one can consume – is one of the IOC's main lines of work, spearheaded by the [Standardization and Research Unit](#). The virtual meeting provided an opportunity for nutrition experts to take stock of the current status of the olive sector in terms of nutrition and to delve into various topics, including specific nutritional claims and mineral oil issue. Additionally, the IOC updated its experts on forthcoming events aimed at disseminating the nutritional and health benefits of olive oil.

In collaboration with the **University of Navarra**, the Organization hosts the "[Olive Health Information System](#) (OHIS)", a platform dedicated to regularly disseminating scientific research showcasing the diverse health advantages of olive oil, which range from mitigating cardiovascular diseases to combating degenerative conditions, among countless others. Stay tuned to the IOC's website, where a new study is published every Friday, further enhancing awareness regarding the health benefits associated with the consumption of olive oil and other olive tree by-products.



THE IOC AT A TECHNICAL CONFERENCE ON OLIVE GROVES AND THE CARBON CREDIT MARKET

OLIVE TREES ARE RESISTANT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

On Monday 18 March, the IOC took part in a technical conference on the carbon credit market in the framework of olive groves, organized in Seville (Spain) by [Oleoestepa S.C.A.](#) Around 60 sector stakeholders, including farmers and cooperative technicians, gathered to discuss the fundamental role played by olive trees acting as carbon sinks, and to assess the current situation and future opportunities for olive groves within the carbon credit market.

The IOC was represented at the conference by **Juan Antonio Polo Palomino**, Head of the Olive Oil Technology and Environment Department. He highlighted that the olive tree is naturally resilient to climate change and that the best-known adaptation strategies, such as effectively using water resources through regulated deficit irrigation and improving the tree's genetic variety, are highly efficient. Additionally, he noted that a soil capable of storing CO₂ is, in fact, a healthy soil. Such soil not only enhances its structure and conductivity but also provides defence against erosion.

Polo emphasized that taking care of the soil's health via known sustainable agronomic practices, such as plant covers, significantly improves an olive grove's operating account, thus making it economically sustainable as well. Regarding the future voluntary carbon credit market, he underscored that the IOC is working tirelessly to ensure that the olive grove's environmental service is recognized as an effective CO₂ absorption mechanism. It's imperative for olive groves to access the voluntary carbon credit market with a specific scheme within the certification framework currently under development by the EU.





THE IOC CO-ORGANIZES A COURSE ON OLIVE TREE PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL IN IRAN

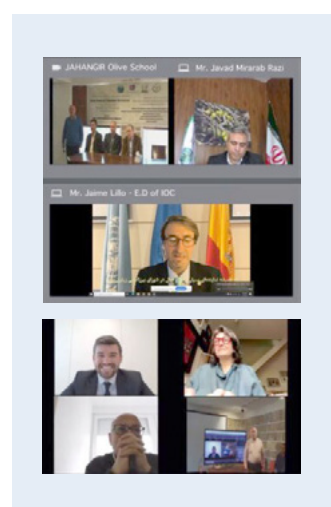
THE PROGRAM WAS LED BY THE OLIVE GROWING, OLIVE TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT UNIT

From 5 to 8 March, the IOC co-organized a course in the **Islamic Republic of Iran** on olive tree pest and disease control at the country's request and in collaboration with the Jahangir Technical and Vocational Center Olive School in the Golestan province. The request falls under the IOC's [Olive Growing](#), [Olive Technology](#) and Environment Unit's co-organization of training and transfer of knowledge activities. The program brought together 49 private and public sector representatives of the main five olive oil and table olive cultivating provinces of Iran. During this workshop, attendees delved into the most recent insights concerning traceability and the control and management of olive pests and diseases. They gained familiarity with the optimal international scientific approaches for their management in order to ensure the production of high-quality olive products.

The course was led by Prof. **Epameinondas Paplomatas** from the Agricultural University of Athens (Greece), and counted on the presence of several local experts. The virtual opening ceremony on Tuesday 5 March was inaugurated by IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo**, who underscored the importance of training activities and wished success for the participants in their journey to improve the health of Iranian olive trees and increase the national olive oil production. **Javad Mir-Arab**, Chairman of the IOC Council of Members for 2024, thanked the intergovernmental organization for its support.

The closing ceremony, which took place on Friday 8 March, convened several IOC and Iranian representatives, including: **Lhassane Sikaoui**, Head of the IOC's Olive Growing, Olive Oil Technology and Environment Unit; **Catarina Bairrão**, Head of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department; **Andoni Olano**, Head of the IOC's External Relations Department; **Jahangir Arab**, Director of Iran's Olive School; **Sajad Alipour**, Director General of Surveillance of Iran's Plant Protection Organization; and the aforementioned **Javad Mir-Arab**.

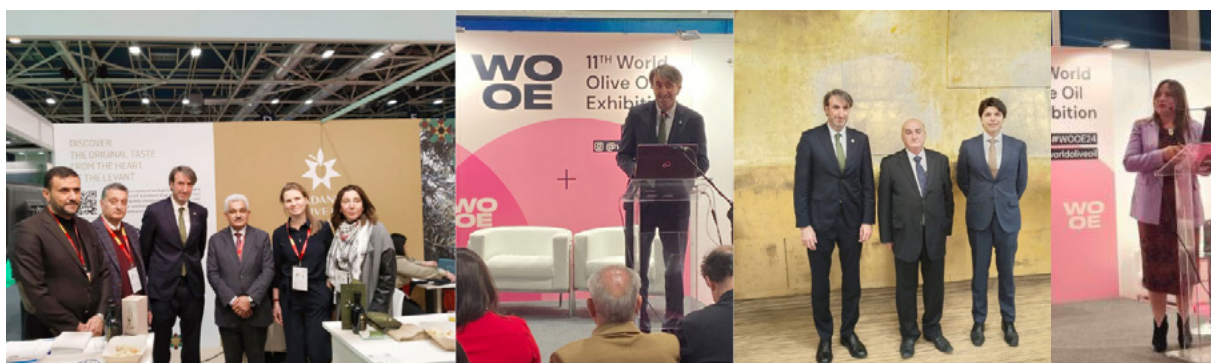
The Islamic Republic of Iran has been a member of the IOC since 2004 and is the Chair of the Council of Members for the year 2024 (see the article on the following pages of this Newsletter). The IOC dedicated its latest edition of *Olivae* to this olive producing country, available [here](#).





THE IOC PARTICIPATES IN THE WORLD OLIVE OIL EXHIBITION

THE TWO-DAY EXPO BRINGS TOGETHER OLIVE OIL PRODUCING AND CONSUMING COUNTRIES



The IOC Executive Secretariat took part in the [World Olive Oil Exhibition \(WOOE\)](#) in Madrid on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 February. The fair, in its 11th edition, is geared towards oil mills, bottling and packaging companies, producers and other sector stakeholders from over forty countries. IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** was invited to participate at the WOOE's inauguration.

The opening ceremony was attended by several high-level diplomats and Spanish government representatives, including the ambassadors of Jordan, Sudan and Tunisia to Spain, the presidents of the deputations of Córdoba, Albacete and Ciudad Real, as well as **José Miguel Herrero Velasco**, General Director for Nutrition of the Spanish Agricultural Ministry, and WOOE General Director **Otilia Romero de Condes**, among others.

IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** gave a presentation on the current situation of the world olive oil sector and the IOC's work in the field of olive oil and table olives, putting particular emphasis on the crop's health and environmental benefits.

He also took the opportunity to hold several bilateral meetings, namely with H.E. Mr. **Daniel Azzopardi**, Maltese Ambassador to Spain, and **Jimmy Magro**, President of Malta's Olive Growers Cooperative, with whom he explored possible pathways of cooperation to develop the country's olive oil sector.

Lillo then met with representatives of **Olive Jordan**, an association bringing together Jordanian olive oil and table olive producers, analysing different potential collaboration opportunities.

Imene Trabelsi, in charge of the IOC's [Promotion Department](#), gave a presentation on the WOOE's second day under the title "A key issue for the marketing of our industry: the olive oil tourism". She explored the opportunities that lay ahead for the sector's stakeholders to promote the entire olive oil value chain through the advocacy of the product's diverse attributes, including its countless health, environmental, cultural and culinary benefits.



THE IOC AT LIFE AGROMITIGA'S RESULTS PRESENTATION

OLIVE OIL IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The IOC's Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**, participated in the results presentation of the [LIFE Agromitiga Project](#) which took place in the framework of *ASAJA-Sevilla's* conference "European agriculture in the face of new climate, environmental and food challenges" (Seville, Spain, Friday 23 February). The LIFE Programme, which has culminated its fifth development phase, stands out as the European Union's (EU) financial tool solely devoted to environmental and climate initiatives. In his intervention, **Jaime Lillo** highlighted the fundamental role played by olive groves in facing climate change.



He recalled that the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** (IPCC) had, [for the first time in history](#), recognised agriculture's carbon absorption capacity as an effective strategy for achieving the United Nation's 2050 climate neutrality objectives. The case of olive groves is particularly relevant in this regard: they represent world's largest forest domesticated by humans, with an average CO₂ absorption capacity of 4.5 t. In simple terms, behind every single litre of olive oil produced breathes an olive grove that captures more than 10kg of CO₂ from the atmosphere.

In the context of a world faced with the challenge of producing more food in a sustainable way for an ever-growing global population, Lillo urged that we bear in mind the fundamental role of agricultural activity as a guarantor of food supplies and as an irreplaceable environmental safekeeper. Before the olive sector lies a fantastic opportunity for ensuring that its natural capacity as a carbon sink be enhanced by more sustainable

agronomic practices and recognised by society through the recently approved voluntary certification framework for carbon credits. In this regard, the IOC Executive Director presented the Organisation's permanent line of work on sustainability and climate change, as well as the progress made towards developing a methodology for calculating the olive groves' carbon balance. Taking into account the olive tree's role as a permanent and stable carbon store, the message is clear: "Olive oil is good for your health and for the environment."

Launched in 1992, the [LIFE Programme](#) is the EU's only financial instrument dedicated exclusively to the environment and climate. Its general objective is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of Community policy and legislation on the environment and climate change, including the integration of the environment into other policies, in order to contribute to sustainable development. The [LIFE Agromitiga](#) project aims to contribute to the transition towards a low-carbon agricultural system by providing validated results applicable to the EU's commitments in global climate partnerships.



IOC MISSION TO SLOVENIA

THE SLOVENIAN INSTITUTE FOR OLIVECULTURE HOSTS THE IOC'S TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT UNIT

The IOC's Olive Growing, [Olive Oil and Environment Unit](#) travelled to Slovenia from 14 to 17 February at the request of the European Union and following an invitation of the country's [Institute for Oliveculture \(IZO\)](#), headed by Maja Podgornik. The visit was centred around the organisation of a **workshop on fertilisation and cryptogamic diseases of the olive tree**. The IOC delegation also had the opportunity to visit the Slovenian olive growing sector, conduct technical visits, participate in sector related workshops and meet with several high-level representatives, including the Slovenian Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food.



Among the highlights of the mission was the meeting with **the Slovenian Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food, H.E. Ms. Mateja Čalušič** and other ministerial representatives, including **Maša Žagar**, Director General for Agriculture; **Gašper Kosec**, Head of the Sustainable Agriculture Sector; Prof. **Rado Pišot**, Director of the Science and Research Centre Koper (ZRS Koper); **Maja Podgornik**, Head of the Oliveculture Institute; and **Tanja Polak Benkič**, responsible for olive cultivation (14 February). The Slovenian delegation provided a presentation of the state of olive cultivation in the country, with emphasis on the high costs related to olive oil production. In its turn, IOC representatives presented the Organisation's many activities and welcomed Slovenia's participation in them, particularly focusing on the importance of olive tree genetic resources and the possibility of transferring healthy, authentic olive genetic material at the request of Slovenian institutions to expand the country's olive collections. Importance was also given to the IOC's work on the olive orchard's carbon balance, which requires the support of all IOC member countries with a view to determining the role that olive growing can play in carbon sequestration.



The IOC's experts also visited the Slovenian Institute for Oliveculture and IOC-recognised sensory and physico-chemical analysis laboratories, headed by **Milena Bučar-Miklavčič**. The discussions with experts were centred mainly around the Slovenian olive varieties listed in the IOC's World [Catalogue of Olive Varieties](#), and the possibility of supplying Slovenian collections with genetic resources available under the True Healthy Olive Cultivars (THOC) project.



RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE IOC

13

The delegation conducted technical visits to some of the country's olive oil mills and visited the Municipality of Koper, an olive-growing region, where they were greeted by **Mateja Hravtin Kozlovič**, Vice-Mayor, and other representatives of the municipality (February 15 – 16).

Finally, the mission culminated with the IOC's participation in a workshop on fertilization and cryptogamic diseases of the olive tree, jointly organised by the IOC and IZO and animated by the experts **Juan Moral** and Prof. **Ran Erel** (February 16 – 17).



BACKGROUND

Slovenia is one of the IOC's [45 member countries](#), represented by the European Union as the Member State. Since 1994, the Institute for Oliveculture (IZO) oversees the social, professional, scientific, technological and economic growth of olive cultivation in the country. The Slovenian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Food appointed the institute in 2017 as a public service provider in the field of olive growing, within which the IZO acts as the national coordinator for olive-culture.

The IOC's [Olive Growing, Olive Oil Technology and Environment Unit](#) was represented by **Lhassane Sikaoui**, Head of Unit, **Catarina Bairrao Balula**, Head of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department, and Juan **Antonio Polo Palomino**, Head of the Olive Oil Technology and Environment Department. The Unit is in charge of ensuring that the most modern and efficient techniques are used all along the olive oil production line. This includes promoting technical cooperation, research and development in olive growing by encouraging both public and private, national and international organisations and/or bodies to cooperate together.





THE IOC JOINS IN CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

THE ORGANIZATION ACKNOWLEDGES THE FUNDAMENTAL ROLE PLAYED BY WOMEN ACROSS ALL DIMENSIONS OF THE OLIVE SECTOR

The IOC, the world's intergovernmental organization dedicated to the olive tree – the international symbol of peace – wishes to dedicate this **International Women's Day** to every single woman connected in some way to the olive oil sector. Be they farmers, producers, packers, researchers, scientists, commercial agents, teachers, students, tasters, and a very long etcetera, each and every one of them plays a fundamental role in the olive world, helping to preserve our common global heritage. The IOC wishes to take this opportunity to call upon all stakeholders to enhance the visibility of the countless contributions women make to our sector.

The Organization is extremely proud to highlight that nearly 60% of its staff are women: out of 29 civil servants, a total of 17 are women. The **International Jury of the Mario Solinas Quality Award**, which met on March 8th at the headquarters, is also composed almost entirely of women. To celebrate this important day, **Jaime Lillo**, IOC Executive Director, participated through a video in the international event organized by the **Arab Olive Oil Women's Network**, one of the many women's organizations with whom the IOC collaborates.





ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

16

AGENDA 2024

THE AGENDA FOR 2024 IS NOW LIVE, INCLUDING WORKING DAYS OF ONLINE INITIATIVES, MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES.

The entire team of the Executive Secretariat had a hand in drawing up this calendar, from the operational [Chemistry and Standardisation](#), [Economics and Promotion](#), and [Technology and Environment Units](#), to the Secretariat and its various administrative units and departments. Intense preparations are underway, including plans to implement the important decisions that will be taken in the meetings of the expert groups, committees and the Council of Members this year, the latter of which will take place in June and November.

We have grouped the events by colour to make them easier to read. You can find the agenda in both English and French by clicking this link [Agenda COI 2024 EN](#), with a handy key at the bottom.

For further information, please contact iooc@internationaloliveoil.org



A SEMINAR ON THE VALORIZATION OF OLIVE BY-PRODUCTS AND WASTE MINIMIZATION

ORGANIZED JOINTLY WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF JAÉN FROM 3 TO 7 JUNE, 2024

The IOC's Olive Growing, Olive Oil Technology and Environment Unit is co-organising a seminar with the University of Jaén on the "Sustainable valorization of by-products and waste minimization in the olive industry". It will be held at the University's campus in morning and afternoon sessions from Monday 3 to Friday 7 June, 2024, both in-person and online, in English, French and Spanish.

Interested participants had until April 19th to respond to the IOC's call for applications.

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,



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

17

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 organisation of the aforementioned seminar in June. 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.



THE IOC OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERT COURSE IN VIRGIN OLIVE OIL TASTING

The Organization has launched a call for applications for students from its member countries to take part in the International Expert Course in virgin olive oil tasting at the University of Jaén (Spain).

The course is designed to promote technology transfer and enhance participants' knowledge of the composition and quality characteristics of virgin olive oils. Professionals from IOC member countries with at least five years' experience in olive oil production, quality control or R&D are invited to apply. The course will take place from September 25 to December 19, 2024 in Jaén.

More information regarding the course and the IOC's scholarships (principles, exclusion, selection and award criteria), as well as the application form, are available [here](#).





MEETINGS OF
THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT



THE IOC AND THE USA STRENGTHEN THEIR TIES

THE NEXT IOC MISSION TO THE USA WILL
TAKE PLACE IN APRIL

A bilateral meeting between the IOC and representatives of the United States Embassy in Spain took place on Friday 8 March. The IOC's Executive Secretariat, represented by the Executive Director, **Jaime Lillo**, and the Head of the Standardization and Research Unit, **Mercedes Fernández**, was welcomed at the US Embassy by Deputy Chief of Mission **Rían H. Harris**, Agricultural Attaché **Karisha Kuypers**, and Senior Agricultural Specialist **Marta Guerrero**. Both delegations discussed avenues for strengthening their cooperation.



Taking into consideration that the US is the world's first importing country of olive oil, both parties welcome the opportunity of enhancing their collaboration and reinforcing the USA's role as an IOC observer country. Ongoing and future IOC activities in the USA were also analyzed, particularly the details of the IOC's upcoming mission to the American country in April, organized with the Organization's strategic partner, the [Culinary Institute of America](#) (CIA). More details on this mission will be available in the next issue of our Newsletter.



TÜRKIYE AND THE IOC STRENGTHEN TIES

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WELCOMED
TÜRKIYE'S AMBASSADOR TO SPAIN

On Tuesday 5 March, Ambassador **Küçükkel Ezberci** visited IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** at the Organization's headquarters in Madrid. The Turkish Ambassador to Spain congratulated Lillo for his new mandate and reaffirmed her country's support of the IOC.

Lillo conveyed his wish to continue developing the fruitful relationship between Türkiye and the IOC, highlighting the pivotal role that this Mediterranean country plays in the olive oil sector and its strategic position as a union point between European and Caucasus countries. He took the opportunity to inform Ambassador



MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

20

Ezberci about the dates of the 119th session of the IOC's Council of Members, scheduled for June 25, and of the Olive Oil World Congress the following day. The Turkish representative emphasized the importance of cross-country collaboration on issues related to agriculture, and asked the Executive Director to act as a nexus between Türkiye and other countries, particularly Spain.

Türkiye joined the IOC in 2017 and plays a significantly active role in the Organization, both at the diplomatic level as well as in terms of knowledge sharing and olive sector community building.

THE IOC WELCOMES GRANDES PAGOS DEL OLIVAR

THE ASSOCIATION FOCUSES ON PROMOTING EVOOS OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY

On Wednesday 21 February, representatives of the founding partners of the Spanish association *Grandes Pagos del Olivar* were received by IOC Executive Director **Jaime Lillo** at the Organisation's headquarters in Madrid.

The association took the opportunity to congratulate Lillo on his mandate and took stock of the situation of the olive oil sector, mainly in what regards EVOOs. The meeting participants discussed on an array of topics particularly affecting this category of olive oils, such as the question of early harvest EVOOs and the IOC trade standard, and the importance of enhancing consumer knowledge regarding olive oil's countless health benefits. Another main topic of conversation was the olive tree's key role in addressing climate change and the IOC's progress in developing a methodology for calculating the carbon balance of olive orchards.

[*Grandes Pagos del Olivar*](#) is among Spain's oldest EVOO associations, established in 2005 with the aim of bringing together producers from across the country that focus on high-quality EVOOs.





JAIME LILLO, GUEST OF HONOR AT THE 2024 OLIO OFFICINA FESTIVAL

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WAS AWARDED THE CULTURA DELL'OLIO 2024 PRIZE

The 13th edition of the Olio Officina Festival took place in Milan, Italy, from Thursday 29 February to Saturday 2 March. **Jaime Lillo**, the IOC's Executive Director, was invited amongst the event's guests of honor.

At the invitation of **Luigi Caricato** – festival director and renowned writer, journalist and olive oil expert – the IOC's Executive Director provided the festival's attendees with an overview of the olive oil sector's current state of affairs and the challenges faced by the industry. He emphasized the urgent need to strengthen the IOC's role, the world's only intergovernmental organization dedicated exclusively to the olive tree, in organizing and coordinating policy activities. Lillo also put the spotlight on the importance of enhancing consumer's knowledge about olive oil's countless health attributes, and olive groves' key role in addressing climate change acting as carbon sinks. Later that day, the event organizers awarded him with the aforementioned **Cultura dell'Olio** prize in recognition of the renewed vision and direction he aims to bring to the IOC, particularly in terms of putting at the forefront the inherent opportunities that lie at the core of the olive tree's products.

The Olio Officina Festival is devoted to the incalculable value of extra virgin olive oil. The three-day event offers a review of international olive oils, tasting sessions and workshops, and a number of talks, presentations and innovative art pieces that put the olive tree's fruit at the center of the conversation. The full program of the 2024 edition can be downloaded [here](#).





PUBLICATIONS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS



THE LATEST OLIVÆ EDITION IS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

As we mentioned in the first issue of this year's Newsletter, Olivæ, the official magazine of the IOC, was dedicated in 2024 to the olive-growing sector of the Islamic **Republic of Iran**, and to the expansion and development of this healthy and sustainable crop throughout the country. After the English version, published on our website at the end of September, the magazine is now available in French, Spanish and Italian. The Arabic version will be released shortly.

"Carrying tales of centuries past: Iran's millennial olive tree" will submerge you in Iran's olive trees, taking you on a journey that spans all of its olive growing regions and beyond. You will learn about the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead for cultivating olive orchards in this region, diving deep into analyses regarding, but not limited to, this product's value chain and its comparative advantage, the diversity of planting systems in Iran, and advancements regarding its production.

You will also be exposed to the multifaceted role that developing the olive sector can have in facing social challenges, and will even be encouraged to try out delicious traditional Iranian olive-based recipes!

To read the latest issue of Olivæ, click [here](#).



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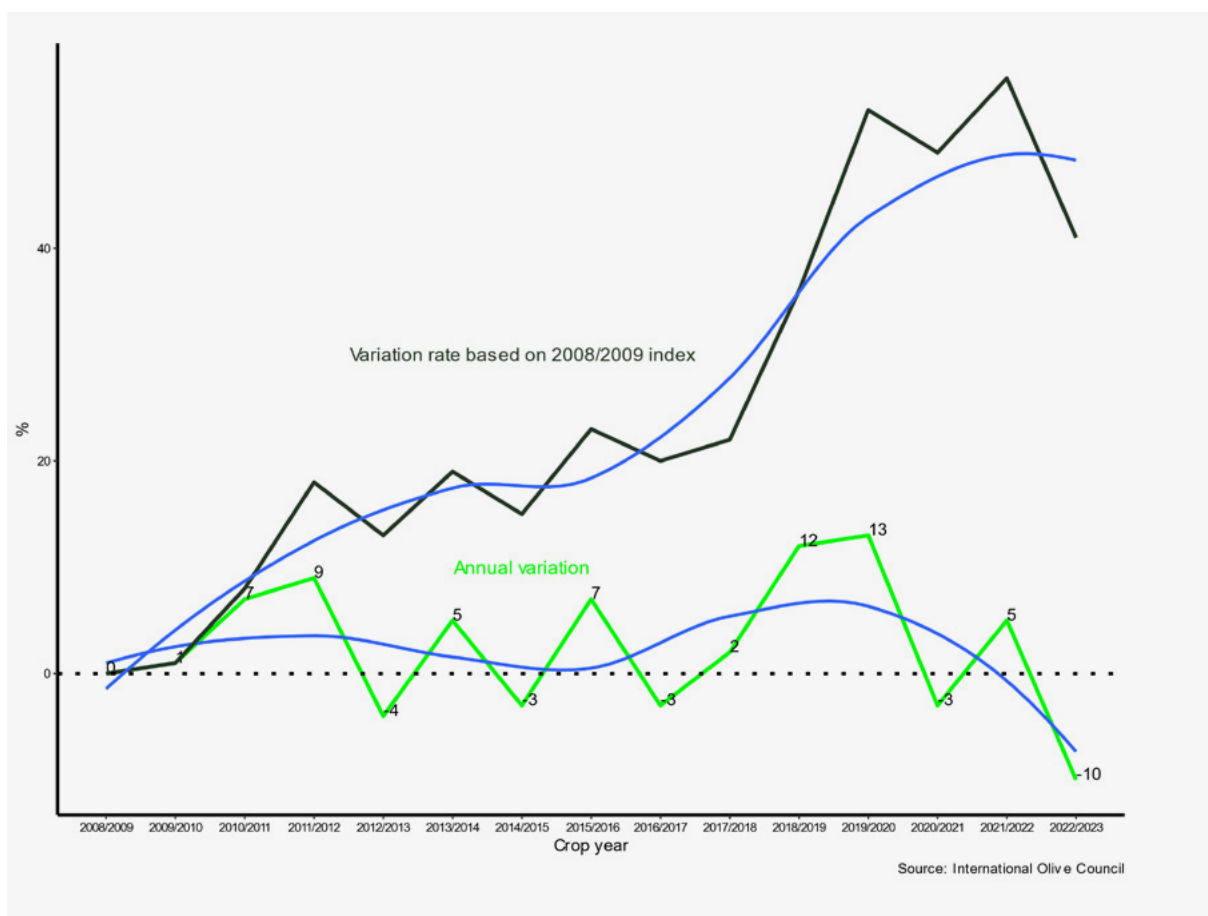


WORLD MARKET OF OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES



UNITED STATES - OLIVE OIL IMPORTS

U.S. olive oil imports reached 358,457 tons in the 2022/23 crop year¹, down 10% in comparison to the 2021/22 crop year.



Graph 1 - Evolution of US olive oil imports.

¹ Provisional data



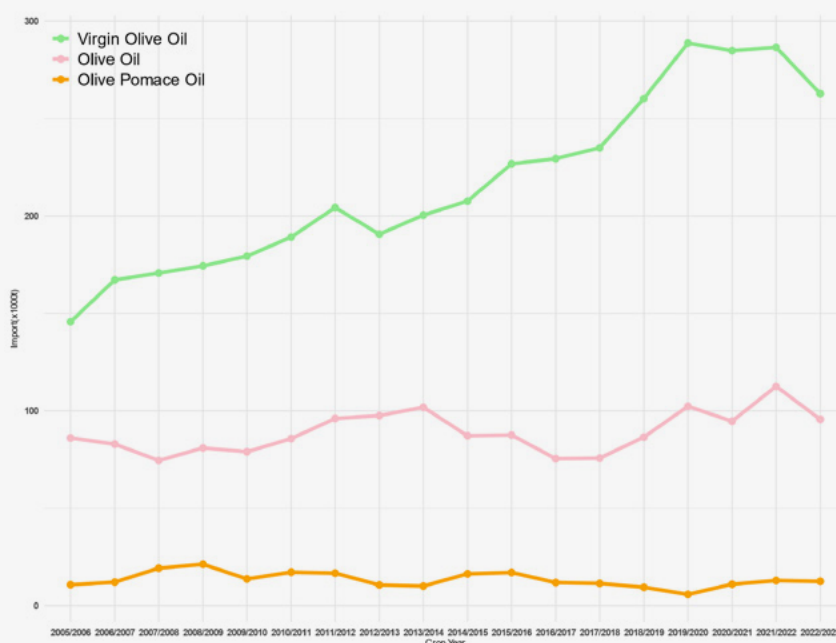
1. OLIVE OIL AND OLIVE POMACE OIL

US imports of olive oil and olive-pomace oil fell by 10% in the 2022/23 crop year to 370,929 tons. Table 1, focusing on the evolution of this country's imports over the last seven crop years, shows that Spain, Italy, Türkiye and Tunisia are the main suppliers to the US, with these four countries contributing 87% of total US imports.

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	%Variation Rates
SPAIN	129766	112739	153386	101175	106085	169358	124325	↓ -26.6
ITALY	117390	106798	112406	119736	121466	119289	112018	↓ -6.1
TUNISIA	15116	40305	29748	85905	80662	53580	37679	↓ -29.7
TÜRKIYE	14681	26635	20768	18004	17480	20492	47288	↑ 130.8
GREECE	9401	9247	11292	11139	11305	12622	16110	↑ 27.6
MOROCCO	3682	4387	8594	6348	5640	5119	1838	↓ -64.1
CHILE	6986	6997	6132	6840	8043	6808	4841	↓ -28.9
ARGENTINA	12855	8022	5579	8802	9282	9389	10335	↑ 10.1
PORTUGAL	1215	1896	3976	34363	25646	10985	7871	↓ -28.4
LEBANON	1285	1473	1394	1603	1702	1206	1624	↑ 34.6
Others	4384	3701	2906	3005	3222	3205	7000	↑ 118.4
Total	316759	322199	356181	396919	390533	412053	370929	↓ -10

Table 1 - Olive oil and olive pomace oil imports by partner country (2016/2017 - 2022/2023)(t)

In terms of volumes by product category, 71% of total imports were virgin olive oils, followed by imports corresponding to code 15.09.90 (olive oils) with 26%. The remaining 3% corresponded to imports of olive-pomace oils.



Graph 2 - Imports by product type 2005/2006 - 2022/2023 (×1000t)



WORLD MARKET OF OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

27

In terms of the type of packaging used, Italy stands out for the predominance of packaging weighing less than 18kg, compared with those weighing 18kg or more, which account for just 6%.

Country	OLIVE OIL				OLIVE POMACE OIL		TOTAL BY CONTAINER		TOTAL
	VIRGIN OLIVE OIL		OLIVE OIL		OLIVE POMACE OIL		<18KG	>=18KG	
	<18KG	>=18kg	<18KG	>=18KG	<18KG	>=18KG	<18KG	>=18KG	
SPAIN	38579	36521	31684	10181	94	7266	70357	53968	124325
ITALY	87579	5100	16798	333	1171	1038	105548	6471	112018
TÜRKIYE	3673	16219	630	24267	183	2316	4486	42802	47288
TUNISIA	11563	19288	1637	5022	0	168	13201	24478	37679
GREECE	8433	5375	1800	448	10	44	10244	5867	16110
ARGENTINA	246	10024	64	1	0	0	310	10025	10335
PORTUGAL	2136	4827	864	7	0	36	3001	4870	7871
CHILE	593	4222	26	0	0	0	619	4222	4841
AUSTRALIA	35	2133	0	361	0	0	35	2493	2528
MOROCCO	924	763	5	147	0	0	929	909	1838
LEBANON	1295	65	236	15	0	13	1531	92	1624
ISRAEL	778	8	55	602	0	9	834	619	1453
PERU	0	971	0	0	0	0	0	971	971
UKRAINE	0	308	0	0	0	0	0	308	308
EGYPT	26	146	46	0	0	0	72	146	218
MEXICO	159	0	48	0	0	0	207	0	207
ALBANIA	138	53	6	0	0	0	144	53	197
NETHERLANDS	0	4	0	146	0	0	0	150	150
SYRIA	61	61	21	4	0	0	82	64	146
OTHERS	474	38	125	61	62	62	661	161	822
TOTAL	156693	106125	54046	41593	1520	10952	212259	158670	370929

* Source: Own elaboration based on United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service

Table 2 - Breakdown of imports by product type and exporting country (2022/2023)(t)

<https://www.internationaloliveoil.org/what-we-do/economic-affairs-promotion-unit/#prices>



WORLD TRADE IN OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

1. OLIVE OIL - 2023/24 CROP YEAR

Trade in olive oil and olive pomace oil on the markets shown in the table below during the 2023/24 crop year (October 2023 - January 2024) fell by 44% in Australia, 34% in Brazil, 14% in Canada, 61% in China, 39% in Japan and 9% in the US compared with the same period of the previous crop year.

In terms of EU trade during the 2023/24 crop year, intra-EU purchases up to December were down 27%, while extra-EU imports up to January were up 15% in the same period of the previous crop year.

No	Importing country	October 22	October 23	November 22	November 23	December 22	December 23	January 23	January 24
1	Australia	2687,1	1916,1	3071,9	1429,3	2423,4	1595,6	3220,5	1474,3
2	Brazil	8488,4	6809,6	12979,1	6225,9	9772,4	6050,4	7735,8	6778,7
3	Canada	4845,4	4228,9	5634,9	4115,8	3862,3	3458,6	3935,3	3917,2
4	China	3447,5	1951,0	7032,8	1795,4	6035,3	1409,9	3220,7	2536,2
5	Japan	5555,5	3323,7	3476,5	3344,9	4508,3	2905,0	4092,4	1171,3
6	USA	37568,0	24902,3	32131,2	29117,9	24321,7	29957,8	32843,2	31094,0
7	Extra-EU/27	10879,0	12457,5	9374,4	15515,0	29095,3	22767,8	8375,4	15918,6
	Intra-EU/27	86190,7	61345,7	101980,4	75909,8	116557,8	84436,5	92295,8	n.d
	Total	159661,6	116934,7	175681,3	137454,1	196576,5	152581,4	155718,9	62890,2

Olive oil imports (including olive-pomace oils)(t)

2. TABLE OLIVES - 2023/24 CROP YEAR

Trade in table olives² during the 2023/24 crop year (September 2023 - January 2024) on the markets shown in the table below fell by 1% in Australia, 7% in Brazil, 1% in Canada and 12% in the US compared with the same period of the previous crop year.

In terms of EU trade in table olives during the 2023/24 crop year, intra-EU purchases up to December were down 16%, while extra-EU imports up to January were up 52% on the same period of the previous crop year.

No	Importing country	September 22	September 23	October 22	October 23	November 22	November 23	December 22	December 23	January 23	January 24
1	Australia	2366,1	1921,8	996,5	1401,8	1600,5	1291,5	1547,0	1638,2	1221,0	1377,2
2	Brazil	11432,5	10309,3	8957,5	10388,9	10838,6	10304,8	11057,8	10235,8	9922,8	7467,6
3	Canada	3172,0	2384,2	2872,2	3234,3	3459,8	3141,1	2661,1	3258,9	2827,9	2769,4
4	USA	14272,0	17496,2	13449,3	12640,9	17146,0	10421,3	13606,8	10596,0	12173,9	10899,6
5	Extra-EU/27	8262,9	9652,4	9177,3	10134,8	8683,8	12810,9	8982,9	17156,8	8453,0	16365,6
	Intra-EU/27	28224,8	26883,3	50645,7	33298,6	31851,5	32783,1	32850,1	27423,8	23537,5	n.d
	Total	67730,2	68647,2	86098,4	71099,3	73580,1	70752,7	70705,7	70309,4	58136,0	38879,4

Table olive imports (t)

¹ According to the 2015 International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, in force since 1 January 2017, a "table olive crop year" is defined as the twelve-month period from 1 September of any one year to 31 August of the following year.



PRODUCER PRICES - OLIVE OILS

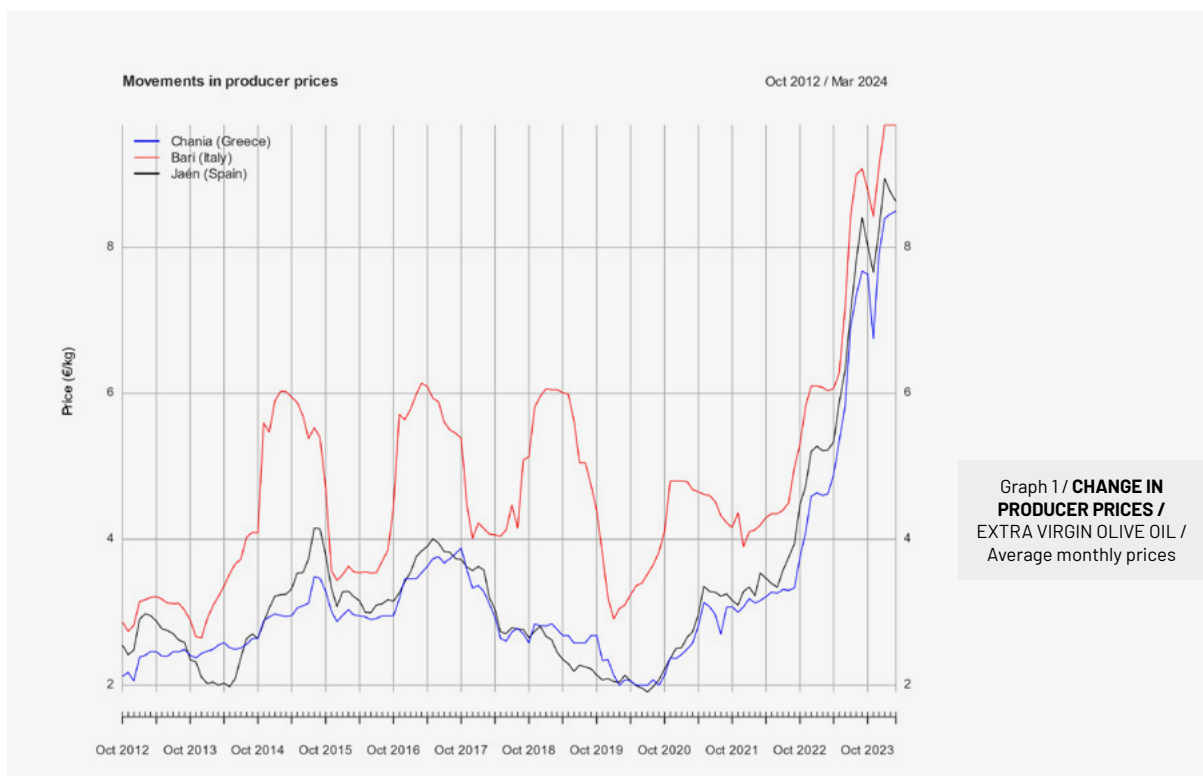
Monthly trends in extra virgin olive oil prices are shown in Graph 1.

Extra virgin olive oil - The producer price for this category in Spain reached €8.65/kg during the week of March 11-17, 2024, an increase of 64.4% on the same period of the previous crop year.

Italy - The producer price for extra virgin olive oil reached €9.68/kg in the week from March 11 to 17, 2024, an increase of 60.5% on the same period of the previous crop year.

Greece - Extra virgin olive oil traded at €8.5/kg price during the week of March 11-17, 2024, an increase of 82.8% compared to the same period of the previous crop year.

Tunisia - The price of extra virgin olive oil was €8.45/kg in the first week of March 2024.



Refined olive oil: The producer price for this category in Spain was €8.31/kg during the week of March 11 to 17, 2024, an increase of 71.9% on the same period of the previous crop year.

The difference between the price of extra virgin olive oil (€8.65/kg) and refined olive oil (€8.31/kg) was €0.34/kg in Spain.

<https://www.internationaloliveoil.org/what-we-do/economic-affairs-promotion-unit/#prices>

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