



INTERNATIONAL  
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COUNCIL

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CONSIGLIO  
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المجلس  
الدولي  
لزيت الزيتون

Madrid, 16 February 2009

## Press release

### Albania joins the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives

Less than a year after it first announced its intention to become a member of the international olive community, the Government of the Republic of Albania has just joined the International Olive Council after filing its instrument of accession to the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2005, with the Government of Spain, the depositary for the Agreement.

With the accession of Albania, the International Olive Council has a membership of 16. Its Members are Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, European Community (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.), Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Serbia, Syria and Tunisia, and now Albania.

Olive growing is an ancient tradition in Albania. Like all the sectors of the economy, it has felt the consequences of the radical changes in the political and economic systems of the country. For almost half a century, olive growing and olive and olive oil processing and marketing were part of a centralised economy and were organised in cooperatives and large State farms.

The agrarian reform of 1993 and privatisation of the olive industry legalised the business activity of newly fledged owners. At present, it is estimated that Albania's olive resources are in the hands of roughly 50,000 households.

Albania's olive orchards are established mainly in the mountainous regions of the country. The plains are reserved for annual or seasonal crops.