



**IOC**

INTERNATIONAL  
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COUNCIL  
**NEWSLETTER**

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## NEW AGENDA FOR THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT



**MADRID /** The pandemic has not stopped the Executive Secretariat from meeting its objectives, even as the institutional schedule has intensified in recent weeks. The agenda for 2021 is now live, including 50 working days of online initiatives, meetings and activities, with further plans for face-to-face events that will hopefully be possible soon.

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 via the link below, with a handy key at the bottom.

<https://www.internationaloliveoil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Agenda-2021-EN-1.pdf>

For further information, please contact [iooc@internationaloliveoil.org](mailto:iooc@internationaloliveoil.org)

## A LIFETIME DEDICATED TO THE IOC

### One of the pillars of the Executive Secretariat is leaving after 41 years of service

**MADRID /** Having reached – even passed – retirement age, **Maria Luisa Albinelli** (pictured in the cover also), known as Gina to her colleagues, has left the International Olive Council after 41 years in the Executive Secretariat. Assistant to many Executive Directors, and part of the team running the Secretariat of the Organisation, Gina was a valuable reference point for all Council Members and colleagues. To commemorate her retirement, an official ceremony was held at which the Executive Director, Abdellatif Ghedira, highlighted her unique contribution and “unconditional dedication to the success of the Organisation”. Jaime Lillo and Mustafa Sepetçi, the Deputy Executive Directors, recalled “her spirit of collaboration” and her role as “the historical memory of the International Olive Council”. Gina received many gifts from all her colleagues and a beautiful silver olive from the Executive Director. We wish Gina all the best in this new chapter.







## IOC WEBINARS

**MADRID /** The Executive Secretariat of the International Olive Council has decided to hold webinars with some of its member countries to discuss their specific needs for developing their domestic olive sectors.

So far, meetings have been scheduled with Georgia (22 February 2021) and Lebanon (26 February 2021), and plans are being made with Morocco and Uruguay, too.



The Executive Secretariat has also extended this practice to countries that have expressed interest in joining the Organisation in the near future, such as Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mauritania and Uzbekistan. These meetings are an opportunity to introduce these countries to the mission of the Organisation and give them an overview of the activities carried out by its various Units.

The Executive Secretariat intends to continue holding these meetings in order to spread awareness about its mission, to inform countries about the role of the IOC in the global olive sector and to give the Organisation better visibility.

## WORKING VISIT OF A LIBYAN DELEGATION TO THE IOC

**MADRID /** A Libyan delegation, led by the Libyan Ambassador to Madrid Walid Abdallah, visited the Executive Director at IOC headquarters on 8 March 2021. The Ambassador was accompanied by two representatives of the Biological Research Centre in Tripoli: Dr Adam Elzagheid, the Director General, and Dr Inas Alhudiri, the Head of the Genetic Engineering Department.



The main objective of this meeting was to study the technical ways and means to include the olive variety 'Tripolitaine' in the future catalogue of the main varieties of the IOC member countries.

Other subjects were discussed, such as the granting of IOC recognition for Libyan laboratories for the chemical and sensory analysis of olive oils and the implementation of the agreements between Libya and the IOC.

A video conference was then organised between the participants of this meeting and the University of Córdoba (Spain), which was represented by Prof. Luis Rallo, to discuss the identification of the 'Tripolitaine' variety and to exchange additional information on the characterisation and authentication of this variety.



## THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT REMEMBERS A DEAR FRIEND

**MADRID /** Today we remember Jesus Maroto, a former deputy director of the administrative and financial units who worked at the IOC from 1989 to 2000, who passed away recently. Thanks to his great work negotiating with the Spanish MAEC, the IOC was given the opportunity to install the offices in its current headquarters. The negotiations that Maroto carried out to move the Executive Secretariat to the current building were not only with the MAEC, but also with many other Spanish authorities.



## MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMISSION OF EXPERTS ON LABORATORY CONTROL

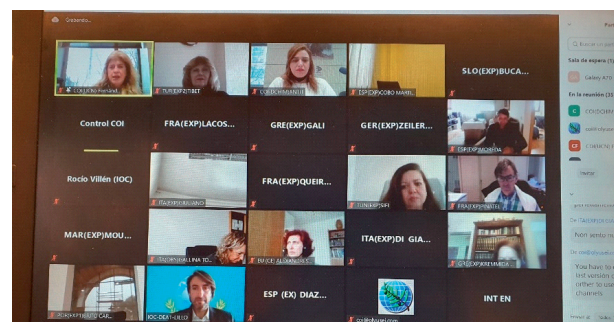
**MADRID /** The meeting of the technical commission of experts on laboratory control was held by videoconference on 20 January 2021. The 2021 proficiency test was organised during this meeting and the attendees decided on the composition of the samples to obtain IOC recognition for physico-chemical analysis laboratories. The three categories of this recognition are type A for basic analysis, B for in-depth analysis and C for residue and contaminant analysis, and it would cover the period from 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022.



Lastly, the applications for IOC recognition for 2021-2022 were examined after they were confirmed to comply with the required conditions.

## MEETING OF EXPERTS ON ORGANOLEPTIC ASSESSMENT

**MADRID /** Some 40 experts on organoleptic evaluation, mostly heads of IOC-recognised tasting panels of virgin olive oils from different countries, met in a videoconference organised by the IOC Executive Secretariat on 10 and 11 February 2021. Several matters of interest were discussed, including the most recent and potential future revisions of the organoleptic assessment method and related documents. Attendees also discussed the progress of





the studies conducted by the electronic working groups on sensory analysis: accreditation, the education and training of tasters, the development of reference material, samples at the borderline between categories, the drafting of a guide for IOC sponsorship of courses organised by competent authorities, and the organisation of the inter-comparative trials for obtaining the recognition of tasting panels for the period 2021-2022.

One of the issues discussed during the meeting was the conclusions of the workshop on harmonising tasting panels with IOC recognition that took place in December 2020. The aim of this workshop was to homogenise these panels and minimise the deviations between them in the results of tasting sessions. Given the success of the first edition, it was decided to hold this workshop in the last quarter of every year.

### MEETING OF EXPERTS ON THE COMPOSITION OF OILS WITH NON-STANDARD PARAMETERS

**MADRID** / On 25 February 2021, the Executive Secretariat held a meeting with the experts on the composition of oils with non-standard parameters by videoconference. During the meeting, the experts discussed the progress of the work on olive oils with non-standard parameters, the priorities for future work, and the work of the electronic working group of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils for the revision of the Codex standard for olive oils and olive-pomace oil.



### OLIVE GERMLASM COORDINATION MEETING

**MADRID** / On 1 March 2021, a meeting was held to discuss the progress of the activities dedicated to the genetic resources of the olive tree that will be held this year. The meeting was attended by the coordinator of the IOC network of olive germplasm banks, Luis Rallo Romero; the Head of the Olive Growing, Olive Technology and Environment Unit, Abdelkrim Adi; and the Head of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department, Catarina Bairrão Balula.

During the meeting, the attendees discussed the second phase of the implementation schedule of True Healthy Olive Cultivars 2, a project that aims to sanitise, identify and authenticate olive gene resources, in particular the main varieties from IOC member countries used in international trade, in order to facilitate their certification.

They also underlined the need to step up the exchange of plant material (ADN, endocarps, register book, etc.) between the international collection at the University of Córdoba and the national collections in IOC member countries in order to meet the objectives of this project. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss the following:

- The first steps for creating the World catalogue of the main genetically authenticated olive tree varieties, which will be based on the morphological descriptors of the UPOV (Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants) and genetic markers, and
- The workshop on the Certification system for olive tree seedlings, an event that will take place in Marrakech from 5 to 9 July 2021 with the participation of the IOC olive germplasm banks.





## SEMINAR: THE OLIVE TREE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

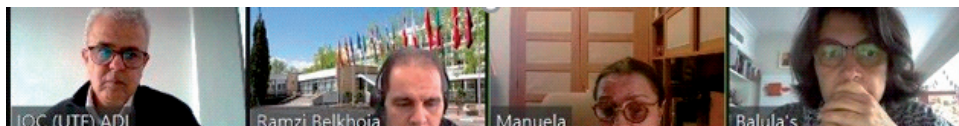
**MADRID /** It is clear that most plants and soils will undoubtedly be impacted as the climate becomes increasingly hot and dry. Certain phenomena have been frequently observed in recent years, such as a very severe drought in some areas of the world, a winter cold deficit and a water deficit, in parallel with the intensification of the alternation patterns of certain olive varieties due to climate change.

In the Mediterranean basin, where the vast majority of the world's olive trees are grown, both cultivated and wild genetic diversity can be an asset in adapting to climate change.

With the aim of finding adequate solutions to mitigate this phenomenon around the olive tree, the Executive Secretariat of the International Olive Council (IOC) and the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (IAMZ-CIHEAM), met on 24 February and 4 March 2021 to prepare the programme for a scientific debate in the framework of an international seminar entitled: the olive tree in the face of climate change.

During the meeting, the head of the Olive Growing, Olive Oil Technology and Environment Unit of the IOC, Abdelkrim Adi; the head of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department of the IOC, Catarina Bairrao Balula; the head of the Educational Programmes of the IAMZ, Manuela Cerezo; and the Coordinator of Plant Breeding Studies of the IAMZ, Ramzi Belkhoa, discussed the topics to be included in the programme, including the choice of olive variety according to recently observed climatic conditions, as well as the list of experts to be invited to the seminar.

Topics such as the evolution of climate change and its negative impact on olive growing as well as measures to overcome its negative effect on international olive production through the adoption of new cultivars and agricultural practices may be discussed at the meeting.



## FOLLOW UP IOC MISSION IN MAURITANIA: FUTURE TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

An IOC delegation, headed by the Executive Director Abdellatif Ghedira, went on mission to Mauritania in February 2021. During this mission, the Head of the Technology and Environment Unit, Abdelkrim Adi held a meeting with the central directors of the Minister of Rural Development and the officials in charge of the country's agricultural sector. They discussed the technical means to begin tests and trials for the production of extra virgin olive oil and guarantee consumption in line with the norms and standards of the IOC through installing physico-chemical and sensory quality control laboratories.



Discussions focused on the conclusions of the IOC's TRUE HEALTHY OLIVE CULTIVARS project, on the work of the Executive Secretariat to identify, conserve and utilise the genetic resources of the olive tree, the



technical collaboration made possible between the national collections of the IOC's member countries, and on the opportunity to collaborate with the international collections and begin a preliminary study to help choose the varieties best adapted to the pedoclimatic conditions of Mauritania.

The Head of the Technical Unit invited the Mauritanian officials to take part in the next international webinar on climate change and the olive tree that will be hosted by the Executive Secretariat by videoconference.

The Executive Director selected three varieties of olive tree from the international collection of Marrakech to give to the Mauritanian Minister during the signing of the plan of action for cooperation.



In order to make the most of its stopovers in Morocco, the IOC delegation, led by the Executive Director, paid a technical visit to the largest olive nursery in Marrakech on 25 January 2021, before travelling to Mauritania on 26 January 2021, where it was welcomed by the Head of the International Olive Collection and the Director of the nursery and his technical staff.

During this meeting, discussions between the two parties focused on the techniques of identification, multiplication and characterisation of olive varieties according to the conclusions of the first part of the TRUE HEALTHY OLIVE CULTIVARS project (THOC1). They also discussed the issues related to the problem of denominations of the varieties exchanged in international trade and on the progress of the THOC2 project carried out in the international collection at Marrakech.

Among the issues addressed during this visit were the issues of the development of olive production in Mauritania and the possibility of regional collaboration between the National Institute of Agronomic Research INRA (Morocco), the National Olive Oil Board (Tunisia) and the Development Directorate of the Mauritanian sectors, under the supervision of the Executive Secretariat of the IOC. It was agreed to carry out a preliminary in situ study to identify the variety or varieties best suited to the soil and climate conditions of Mauritania. Olive trees of three varieties from the international collection in Marrakech were selected and prepared to be given to the Minister of Rural Development of Mauritania by the Executive Director of the International Olive Council.





## TRUE HEALTHY OLIVE CULTIVARS 2 PROJECT

**MADRID /** The Executive Director of the International Olive Council (IOC) Mr. Abdellatif Ghedira, and José Carlos Gómez Villamandos, the Rector of the University of Córdoba (UCO), signed an agreement for the project entitled TRUE HEALTHY OLIVE CULTIVARS 2.

The signature of this agreement follows the agreement signed on 27 November 2014 between the IOC, the Consejería de Agricultura, Pesca y Desarrollo Rural de la Junta de Andalucía, the University of Córdoba and the Instituto Andaluz de Investigación y Formación Agraria, Pesquera y Alimentaria y de la Producción Ecológica para la Conservación y Uso sostenible de los Recursos Genéticos del Olivo; and the agreement signed on 28 June 2018 between the IOC and the UCO for the joint execution of the True Healthy Olive Cultivars project.



The objectives of this project are to:

- Authenticate the most important commercial cultivars found in the BMGO-UCO collection and in particular those of commercial interest for the germplasm banks on the IOC network;
- Verify the presence or absence of the pathogens indicated in the project according to the European Directive (Council Directive 2008/90/EC, Implementing Council Directive 2014/98/EU and EPPO PM/4/17): *Xylella fastidiosa*, *Verticillium dahliae*, *Pseudomonas savastanoi*, ArMV, CLRV, SLRV, Meloidogyne Spp. and Xiphinema;
- Eradicate the corresponding pathogens in the event of a positive diagnosis;
- Establish mother plants from initial plant material in the international repository of commercial olive varieties of the germplasm bank BGMO-UCO, to obtain healthy and authentic initial material;
- Provide the participating national germplasm banks with plant material that is genetically and morphologically authenticated and healthy, ready for use and of international commercial interest.
- This plant material will be the initial mother plant to be used for propagation in nurseries in IOC member countries;
- Guarantee the identification and varietal denominations that shall facilitate the preparation of a future catalogue of the main commercial varieties.

The active participation of the olive germplasm banks of the IOC network will be fundamental to the success of this project. This will in turn help establish a global network for the conservation of olive gene resources that are authentic and sanitised, and for the use of these olive gene resources in different environments and climates. This project also aims to form a base instrument for certifying the main varieties used in international trade.



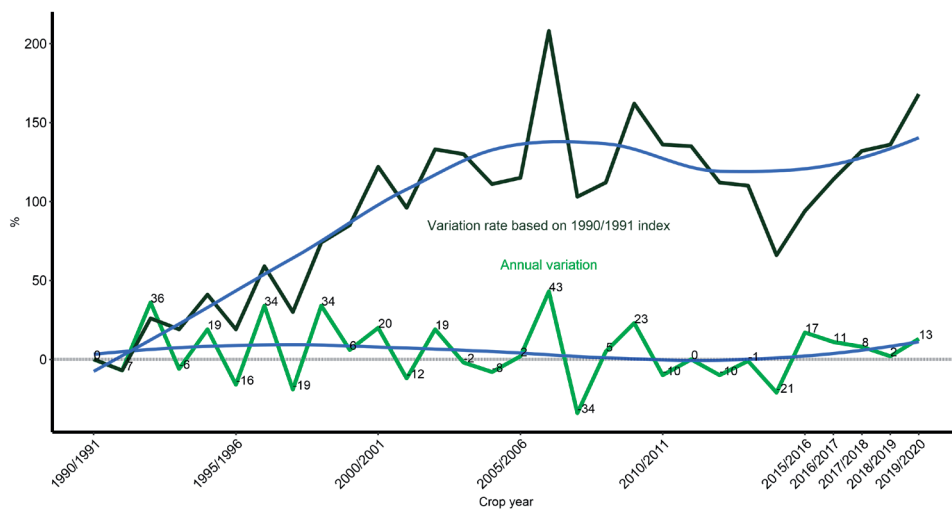
## THE WORLD OF OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

Source: Economy and Promotion Unit



### FOCUS AUSTRALIA - OLIVE OIL IMPORTS

Australia's imports continue to grow. In the 2019/20 crop year, the country imported 13.5% more virgin olive oil and olive oil than the previous year, reaching 36 204 tonnes.

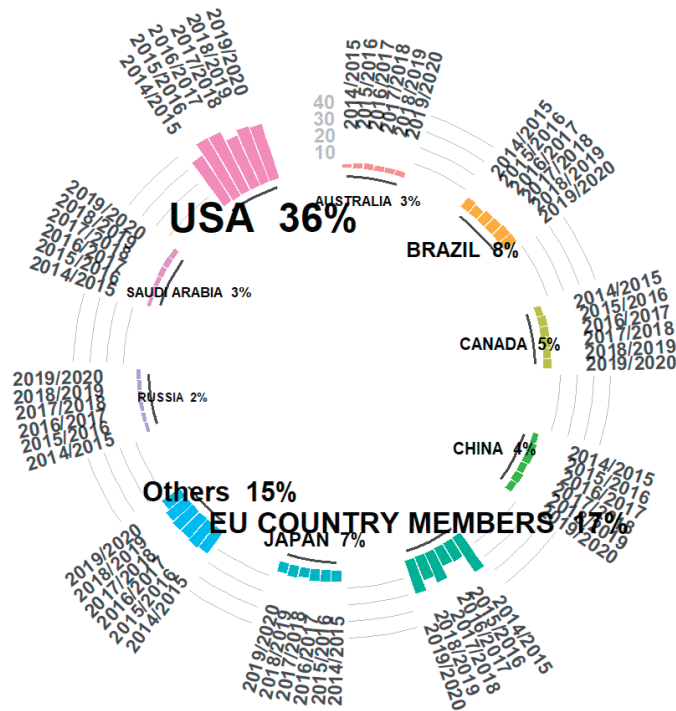


Source: International Olive Council



## 1. OLIVE OIL AND OLIVE POMACE OIL

Australia accounts for around 3% of world olive oil imports, behind the United States (36%), the European Union (17%), Brazil (8%), Japan (7%), Canada (5%) and China (4%). These seven account for 80% of world imports.



Graph 1 - Olive oil and olive pomace oil, percentage of world imports (average 6 crop years)

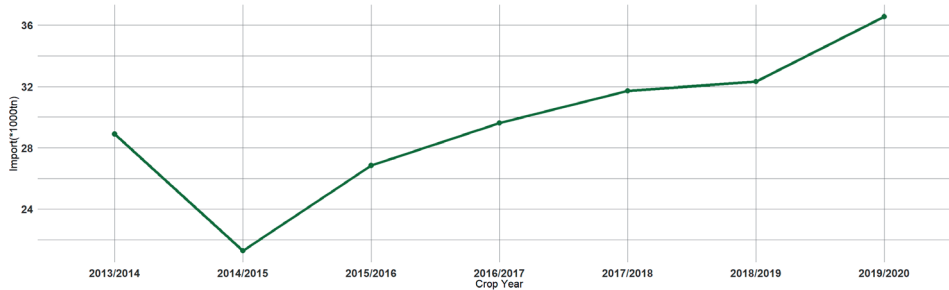
Imports of olive oil and olive pomace oil into Australia increased by 13.1% in the last crop year. The olive oil market in Australia maintained continuous growth during the period from 2014/15 to 2019/20. In 2019/20, imports reached 36 558t, which is 36.2% more than in the 2015/16 crop year.

Table I shows changes in imports over the last five crop years. Spain, with an increase of 31.1% compared to the previous crop year, is Australia's main supplier.

	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	%Variation Rates
SPAIN	17661	20435	23031	22223	29125	↑ 31.1
ITALY	6116	5686	5480	6449	4105	↓ -36.3
GREECE	1584	1513	1380	1206	1385	↑ 14.9
TURKEY	293	712	602	1012	557	↓ -45
LEBANON	220	294	434	343	516	↑ 50.6
TUNISIA	641	423	357	498	309	↓ -38
USA	6	87	132	97	150	↑ 54.4
SYRIA	93	77	103	109	119	↑ 8.8
Others	236	397	181	377	292	↓ -22.5
Total	26850	29624	31699	32315	36558	↑ 13.1

Table 1 - Imports of olive oil and olive pomace oil by country of origin (2015/16 - 2019/20)(t)





Graph 2 – Changes in imports 2013/14 – 2019/20 (x1000 t)

In the 2019/20 crop year, just over 94% of all olive oil and olive pomace oil imports into Australia came from European Union countries, with Spain in the lead with 79.7%, followed by Italy with 11.2%. The remaining countries are below 4%.

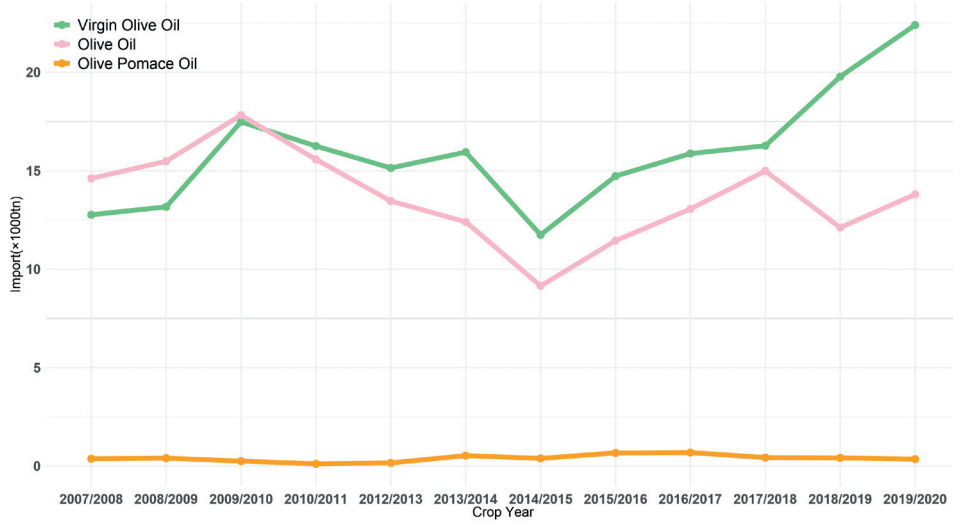
In terms of volumes by product category, 61.2% of imports were under code 15.09.10 (virgin olive oils), followed by imports under code 15.09.90 (olive oils) with 37.8% and the remaining 1% under code 15.10.00 (olive pomace oils).

Country	OLIVE OIL		OLIVE POMACE OIL	TOTAL
	150910 VIRGIN OLIVE OIL	150990 OLIVE OIL	151000 OLIVE POMACE OIL	
SPAIN	16667	12408	51	29125
ITALY	3267	679	159	4105
GREECE	1299	85	1	1385
TURKEY	379	160	18	557
LEBANON	370	146	0	516
TUNISIA	23	286	0	309
USA	150	0	0	150
SYRIA	117	2	0	119
GERMANY	0	0	69	69
PERU	65	0	0	65
NETHERLANDS	1	0	56	57
OTHERS	64	36	0	101
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22402</b>	<b>13802</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>36558</b>

\* Source: Own elaboration based on AUSTRALIA Customs

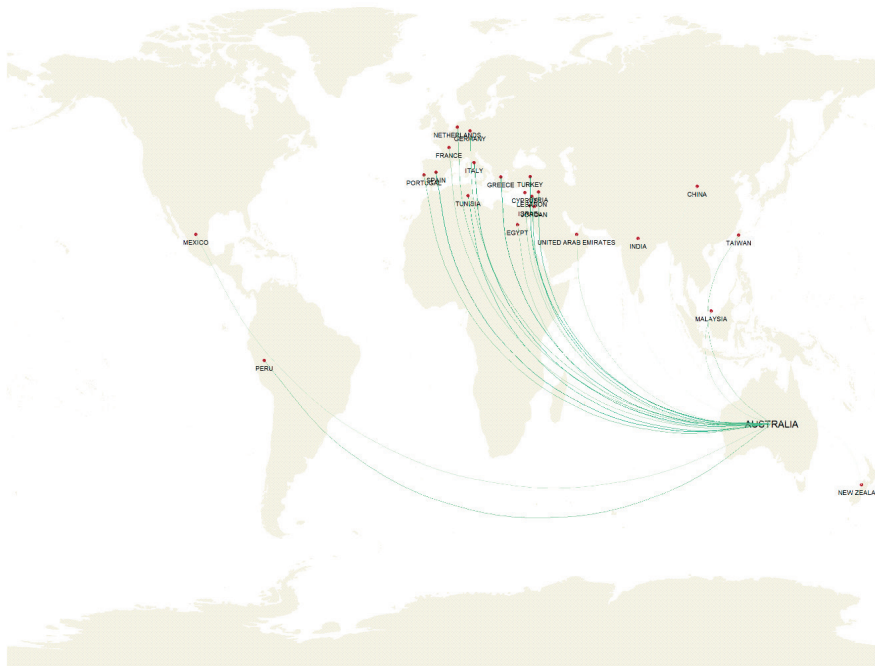
Table 2 – Distribution of imports by product type and country - 2019/2020 (t)

Imports of virgin olive oils and olive oils have shown a change in trend since the 2014/2015 crop year. The volume of virgin olive oil imported has increased by 75.5% if we compare the 2019/2020 crop year with the 2007/2008 crop year, when they represented 46% of imports.



Graph 4 – Changes in imports by product type 2007/08 – 2019/20 (x1000 t)

Olive oil imports to AUSTRALIA, 2019/20 crop year



Source: IOC own elaboration based on Australian Bureau of Statistics

Map 1 – Flow of imports to Australia– 2019/20.



## Table olives

The Australian table olive market stood at around 17 000 t in the last 12 crop years, reaching 16 330 t in 2019/20 (September 2019 - August 2020), around 2.5% of world imports.

Table II shows imports in the last crop year by country of origin. Among them, Greece stands out as the main supplier with 49.8% of the imported volume (8 129 t). It is followed by Spain with 33.7% (5 497 t); Italy with 7.4% (1 207 t); and Turkey with 3.2% (525 t). The remaining countries are below 3%. In section I.2, you will find monthly changes in this market.

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	%Variation Rates
GREECE	10513	10385	9866	8129	↓ -17.6
SPAIN	3891	3861	5841	5497	↓ -5.9
ITALY	1083	932	1158	1207	↑ 4.3
TURKEY	715	770	587	525	↓ -10.7
EGYPT	199	279	356	379	↑ 6.6
SYRIA	45	1	29	130	↑ 348
PERU	166	163	124	129	↑ 3.8
LEBANON	82	99	107	112	↑ 5.3
ARGENTINA	117	123	119	66	↓ -44.9
ISRAEL	42	37	51	52	↑ 0.6
CHILE	0	11	44	45	↑ 2
MOROCCO	681	456	71	28	↓ -60
Others	63	143	134	32	↓ -76.1
Total	17597	17260	18488	16330	↓ -11.7

Table 3 - Imports of table olives by country of origin 2016/17 - 2019/20 (×1000 t)

## I. WORLD TRADE IN OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

### 1. OLIVE OIL – 2020/21 CROP YEAR

The table below shows trade in olive oil and olive pomace oil in eight countries in the first three months of the current crop year (October 2020 - December 2020). Imports rose by 32% in Canada; 29% in Australia; 24% in Brazil; and 14% in the US compared to the same period the previous crop year. On the other hand, imports fell by 11% in Japan and 3% in China. Data from Russia were only available up until November when this newsletter went to print, indicating an increase of 34%.

In the first two months of the 2020/21 crop year, intra-EU acquisitions remained stable and extra-EU imports rose by 67% compared to the same period the previous crop year .





OLIVE OIL IMPORTS (INCLUDING OLIVE POMACE OIL)(T)						
Country	OCTOBER 19	OCTOBER 20	NOVEMBER 19	NOVEMBER 20	DECEMBER 19	DECEMBER 20
Australia	2275.4	3353.3	2471.8	2563.6	2443.6	3377.3
Brazil	8334.3	11052.3	10999.9	12249.6	7845.2	10356.0
Canada	4516.1	5755.7	4001.1	5146.6	4182.1	5900.5
China	3203.8	2588.2	6565.4	5438.5	6586.4	7785.1
Japan	4963.1	4902.6	5298.7	6160.0	7189.2	4478.2
Russia	3411.8	4156.7	2628.9	3908.1	2904.4	-
USA	33224.7	29339.7	22626.7	33389.2	27204.7	32336.5
Extra-EU	13337.0	19817.7	11688.1	22010.5	17869.3	-
Intra-EU	102199.1	98528.6	100322.8	104971.3	115451.0	-
Total	180976.3	179494.7	169448.3	195837.4	194816.3	64233.6

## 2. TABLE OLIVES – 2020/21 CROP YEAR

The table below shows trade in table olives in the 2020/21 crop year 2020/21 (September 2020 – December 2020). Imports grew by 33% in Canada, 30% in Australia and 28% in Brazil compared to the same period the previous crop year. However, imports fell by 17% in the US.

In the first three months of the 2020/21 crop year (September 2020 – November 2020), intra-EU acquisitions of table olives fell by 9% and extra-EU imports rose by 22% compared to the same period the previous crop year.

TABLE OLIVE IMPORTS (T)								
Country	SEP 19	SEP 20	OCT 19	OCT 20	NOV 19	NOV 20	DEC 19	DEC 20
Australia	1177.7	1590.2	1187.7	1470.6	1606.4	1671.5	1315.2	2141.9
Brazil	9869.7	14702.7	12570.2	17012.7	13466.6	14990.8	11834.1	14363.3
Canada	2310.2	4139.0	2934.7	3671.0	2863.4	4088.8	3192.4	3140.7
USA	14579.7	8942.1	14945.7	11341.4	13593.2	13197.0	11738.4	11828.2
Extra-EU	6993.8	8372.4	8276.1	10867.0	9150.1	10492.1	9325.1	-
Intra-EU	26166.8	29487.6	38698.8	29041.7	31792.5	29070.6	33542.1	-
Total	62000.9	67232.9	80537.5	33495.7	74518.7	73510.8	66565.9	31474.1



## II. PRODUCER PRICES – OLIVE OILS

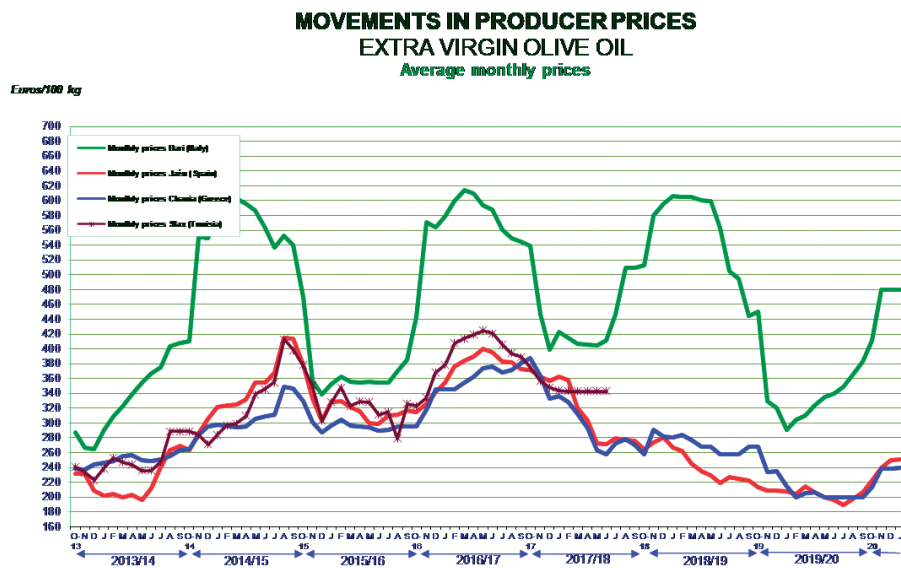
Monthly price movements for extra virgin olive oil and refined olive oil are shown in graphs 1 and 2.

**Extra virgin olive oil** - Producer prices in Spain from 21 to 27 December 2020 stood at €2.52/kg, a 17.1% increase compared to the same period the previous crop year.

**Italy** - Prices in Italy from 14 to 20 December 2020 stood at €4.8/kg, a 50% increase compared to the same period the previous crop year.

**Greece** - Prices in Greece from 14 to 20 December 2020 stood at €2.33/kg, a 1.1% fall compared to the same period the previous crop year.

**Tunisia** - Prices in Tunisia remained stable in the last weeks of June 2018, at €3.43/kg, an 18% fall compared to the same period the previous crop year.



Graph 1

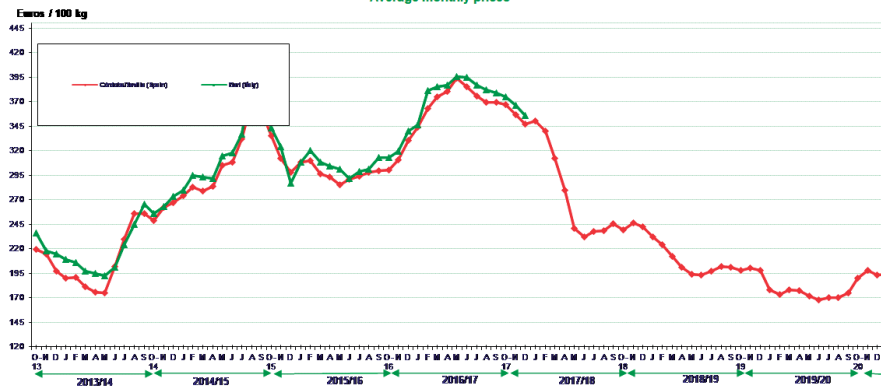
**Refined olive oil** - Producer prices in Spain stood at €2.25/kg from 15 to 21 February 2021, which indicates an increase of 28.6% compared to the same period the previous crop year. Data for Italy in this category have not been available since the end of December 2017 when they had increased by 4% to €3.56/kg.

The difference between the price of extra virgin olive oil (€2.69/kg) and refined olive oil (€2.25/kg) in Spain was €0.44/kg. In Italy, the difference was €0.43/kg in December 2017 (Graph 2).



### MOVEMENTS IN PRODUCER PRICES REFINED OLIVE OIL

Average monthly prices



Graph 2





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## STAY TUNED!

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<http://www.internationaloliveoil.org>

Keep up with the olive sector through Olive News:

<http://www.scoop.it/t/olive-news>

and the goings on at the IOC:

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Our scientific journal Olivæ is available at:

<http://www.internationaloliveoil.org/store/index/48-olivæ-publications>



IOC Head quarters:  
C/ Príncipe de Vergara 154, Madrid