

INTERNATIONAL OLIVE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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THE IOC HOSTED A BRIEFING AT ITS HEADQUARTERS ON ITS UPCOMING MISSION TO WASHINGTON DC

On Tuesday 12 September, 2023, the **International Olive Council** (IOC) held a briefing at its headquarters regarding the Executive Secretariat's upcoming mission to Washington DC. The event was an opportunity for the Organisation to present to representatives of IOC member countries its longstanding collaboration with its strategic partner, the **Culinary Institute of America** (CIA), outline the activities that will take place during the Secretariat's visit to the United States Congress in October, and mobilise member countries to provide their support in order to consolidate the IOC's efforts and cooperation with the American government, federal institutions and stakeholders in the olive oil and food sector. The meeting was attended both in person and online by a number of delegates from Argentina, the European Union, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Tunisia, Türkiye, the US and Spain's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.





The event participants also had the opportunity to taste extra virgin olive oils and dishes made with Mario Solinas 2023 award-winning extra virgin olive oil. The session was led by **Mercedes Fernández**, Head of the Standardisation and Research Unit, who explained the concept of sensory analysis and its importance for the classification and quality of oils.



The briefing was hosted by the IOC's Executive Director, Abdellatif Ghedira, and Deputy Executive Director, Jaime Lillo. It also counted on the participation of two representatives from the CIA, namely Michael Sperling, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Santiago Mas de Xaxàs Faus, co-Executive Director of the Torribera Mediterranean Center. The IOC's collaboration with the US began approximately eight years ago and, since 2019, the country has participated as an observer, regularly contributing to a number of meetings and events. Taking into account that the US is the main global importer of olive oil and that its population is showing an ever-growing interest in leading healthier and more sustainable life styles, where olive oil is increasingly becoming a fundamental part of the American diet, the IOC is looking to take its cooperation with the American authorities a step forward. To this end, the IOC partnered with the CIA, a prestigious, private non-for-profit college established in 1946 and dedicated to providing the world's best professional culinary education. With the common goal of translating the olive oil sector's technical knowledge to practical terms, they have successfully collaborated on a number of projects, such as the "Olive oil and the Plant-Forward Kitchen", which looks at how olive oil makes Mediterranean cuisine so delicious, creating digital content, and disseminating the IOC standard while raising awareness of the importance of olive oil consumption (and the concepts of tasting, quality, positive and negative attributes, composition, authenticity, etc.) in the educational, scientific, institutional and gastronomic spheres through the regular organisation of tasting sessions. In addition, in collaboration with the CIA and Menus of Change University Research Collaborative (MCURC), the IOC also organised training sessions in extra virgin olive oil tasting for 16 American universities in 2021.



Next month, the IOC Executive Secretariat will travel to Washington DC for a meeting at the Capitol on October 25th and a tasting lunch and seminar on October 26th. Both events will bring together US senators, members of the US Congress and senior staff with oversight of food, agriculture and health, representatives of the American food industry, the wider diplomatic community, and other relevant stakeholders. They will constitute an opportunity for the IOC and the CIA to raise the visibility of the Mediterranean diet and the health benefits of olive oil; increase the collaboration between the US government and industry leaders and the IOC, the EU, the Mediterranean region and beyond; as well as further securing the long-term growth and resilience of the olive oil sector as a major contributor to public and planetary health. The representatives of IOC member countries that attended the briefing in Madrid communicated their full support for the forthcoming events and welcomed the strengthening of the IOC's collaboration with the United States.

MEETING BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE IOC AND THE SPANISH MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

The Executive Director of the IOC, **Abdellatif Ghedira**, met with the Spanish Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, **Luis Planas**, on Monday 11 September 2023 at the Ministry's headquarters. The Executive Director was accompanied by **Jaime Lillo**, current IOC Deputy Director and future Executive Director as of January 2024.



The meeting addressed various issues related to the situation of the olive oil sector, both in Spain and worldwide. The IOC also had the opportunity to present to the Minister **Luis Planas** the international workshop that the Organisation will be organising on 17 October: "Carbon balance of the olive sector: part of the solution against climate change". The workshop, which will count on the support of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, as well as the participation of numerous international experts, will analyse the important role of the olive grove in contributing to the fight against climate change.

The IOC representatives and Minister **Luis Planas** took this opportunity to reinforce and reaffirm the close collaboration between the intergovernmental agency and the Government of the Kingdom of Spain.

THE IOC AND THE CIHEAM LAUNCH THEIR JOINT COURSE ON "EFFICIENT WATER USE IN OLIVE GROVES IN A CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE"

It is well-known that water is becoming an increasingly scarce commodity across the planet. This new reality has pushed olive-growing countries to adopt novel policies and to take decisions with regard to national water management that will certainly have a considerable impact on the sector's future, and that of our communities as a whole.



It is in this context that the IOC and the **Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza** (CIHEAM - IAMZ) launched their advanced course on "Efficient water use in olive groves in a context of climate change". The course ran from Monday 18th to Saturday 23d of September, 2023. Throughout that week, course participants dove into how water can be used efficiently in olive growing, specifically within a context of climate change; learned about the olive crop's water requirements and its soil balance, and adopted recommended management strategies aimed at preventing water losses in the field; as well as introduced innovative and groundbreaking technologies with a view to optimising water use and other resources, and improve irrigation management strategies through the use of low-quality water, soil management and fertigation. Finally, this course also constituted a unique opportunity for the students to share their knowhow and personal experiences from their countries of origin, thus creating an exclusive collaborative space aimed at tackling the sensible issue of climate change from the perspective of water usage in olive groves.

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The inauguration ceremony took place on Monday 18 September at the CIHEAM's headquarters in Zaragoza. It counted on the participation of representatives from the organising institutions, namely **Lhassane Sikaoui** (Head of the IOC's Olive Growing, Olive Technology and Environment Unit) and **Raúl Compés** (Director of the CIHEAM Zaragoza), as well as **Catarina Bairrao Balula** and **Juan Antonio Polo Palomino** from the IOC and **Ramzi Belkhodja** from CIHEAM Zaragoza. They welcomed close to sixty course participants, spanning nineteen different countries, particularly: Algeria, Argentina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Türkiye and Uruguay. The course brought together a range of experts in the field, such as **Helder Fraga, Mladen Todorovic, Luca Testi, Álvaro López-Bernal, Maria Victoria González, Kostas Chartzoulakis, Kamel Gargouri, Alon Ben-Gal, Ignacio Lorite, Salvatore Camposeo and Andi Mehmeti**, among many others.





From left to right: **Lhassane Sikaoui** (Head of the Olive Growing, Olive Technology and Environment Unit at the IOC),

Raúl Compés (Director of CIHEAM Zaragoza),

Catarina Bairrao Balula (Head of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department at the IOC),

Juan Antonio Polo Palomino (Head of the Olive Technology and Environment Department at the IOC), and

Ramzi Belkhodja (Head of Plant Production, Health and Breeding at CIHEAM Zaragoza).

The IOC will publish the important conclusions of this advanced course in the following weeks.

THE IOC PREPARES FOR WORLD OLIVE DAY 2023



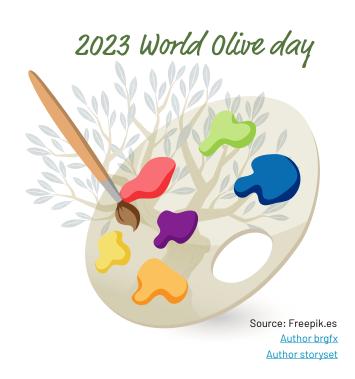
The IOC is pleased to announce that the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) will be collaborating on the next World Olive Day, which will focus on the vital role of women in the olive sector. CIHEAM Secretary General Teodoro Miano and IOC Executive Director Abdellatif Ghedira met with their teams on 13 September 2023 to discuss the programme for what promises to be an exciting event.

This year, the IOC will be celebrating **World Olive Day** on Thursday 23 November at its headquarters in Madrid, as part of the 118th session of its Council of Members. On this occasion, women working in the olive oil sector and their fundamental role in the entire olive oil production chain and in the transmission of knowledge and know-how will be the protagonists of this event.

The IOC Executive Secretariat met several times over the summer with representatives of the main women's associations active in the olive sector to draw up the programme for the ceremony, which will include tastings of typical dishes and olive oils from all over the world, an <u>artwork competition devoted to the olive tree</u>, the presentation of women's videos and speeches by prominent figures.

World Olive Day was proclaimed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) at its General Conference in 2019 and on the occasion of its 40th session. As this organisation points out, this thousand-year-old "universal tree" is not only essential for the lands where it is grown, but also for the communities of our shared planet as a whole.

We'll be publishing more information on what promises to be an exciting day as soon as possible!



EXPERTS WILL GATHER AT THE IOC TO ANALYSE THE OLIVE GROVE'S FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE ACTING AS A CO2 SINK

Climate change is indisputably one of the greatest challenges faced by humankind across the globe in the current century. It is rapidly affecting our way of living every day, rendering the urgent search for solutions to this threat a main priority item in the international agenda. The United Nations has established a series of climate goals that are aimed in large part at reducing the global carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in order to avoid our planet from overheating. A task which requires the input and effort from all aspects of society.

It is no wonder that the olive tree, a crop as old as time that is at the heart of the prosperity, life and health of the Mediterranean basin and other corners of the world, also plays a key role in addressing climate change. As part of their millennial photosynthesis process, olive trees capture and absorb carbon, storing it in the soil. According to a 2017 study developed by the International Olive Council (IOC), the world olive-growing area spans approximately 10.5 million hectares, meaning it could remove around 47 million tons of CO2 per year. The data sustains that, on average, one hectare of olive grove can capture 4.5 tons of CO2 per year.

Taking into account the total life cycle of olive oil, this means that the production of 1 kg of olive oil can remove up to 10 kg of CO2 from the atmosphere.



Unquestionably, the olive grove stands in a unique position as part of the solution to climate change and should receive a well-earned recognition for its fundamental environmental role. Moreover, this acknowledgement could also have a potentially positive effect on the life of farmers as a whole, as their sustainable and positive agronomic practices could be recognised in the context of 'carbon credit' initiatives. For instance, the European Union is currently working on the development of a framework for certifying carbon removals, implying that these 'carbon credits' from agriculture could hypothetically be monetised on the voluntary emissions market.

INTERNATIONAL

COUNCIL



The IOC, in its unique capacity as the world's only intergovernmental organisation focusing on olive oil and table olives, is entirely engaged with and committed to the development of sustainable solutions to climate change that put the olive tree at the centre of its actions and that ultimately have a positive effect for all of its stakeholders. In this context, the IOC will be organising an international workshop under the working title "Carbon balance of the olive sector: part of the solution against climate change" at its headquarters in Madrid from Tuesday 17th to Thursday 19th of October, 2023. The event will bring together leading stakeholders from the olive sector, from experts, lawyers and policy makers to project coordinators and representatives of private companies. The workshop participants will discuss on a wide range of topics relating to the carbon balance of olive groves, such as on the scientific consensus surrounding the topic and on the possibility of putting forward an algorithm for calculating said balance, among many other themes. It will be a unique opportunity for them to exchange on their experiences, reflect on the position of the olive and table olive sector in its contribution to addressing climate change, and on how the current situation can actually benefit the sector as a whole.

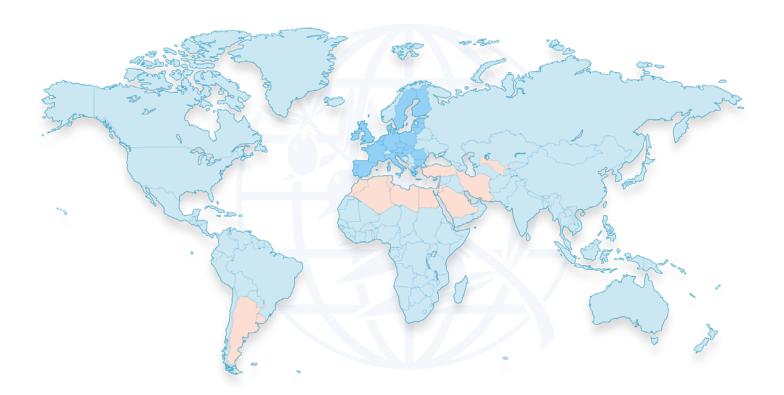
More detailed information on the workshop will be published on the IOC's <u>website</u> in the following weeks and in upcoming editions of our monthly newsletter.

THE IOC ANNOUNCES THE DATES OF THE 118TH SESSION OF ITS COUNCIL OF MEMBERS

Representatives of the IOC's <u>member countries</u> will gather for the second time this year at the Organisation's headquarters in Madrid and online on the occasion of the **118th session of its Council of Members**. The delegates will participate virtually in the meetings of the specialised committees from 15 to 17 November. During these dates, the Executive Secretariat will inform the members of the Administrative and Financial Affairs Committee, the Economic Affairs and Promotion Committee, the Chemistry and Standardisation Committee and the Technology and Environment Committee, on the latest updates regarding its work and other relevant information.

On Thursday 23 November, the representatives of IOC member countries will also convene at the Organisation's headquarters and online on the occasion of the plenary session. Further to the presentation of the outcomes of the four specialised committees, the delegates will also vote on the two Deputy Executive Directors who will assume office in the month of July of 2024. The vacancy notices for the posts of Deputy Executive Directors were published on the IOC website on 12 July 2023 and the deadline for receipt of applications was 10 September 2023 at midnight (Madrid time).

Moreover, and as aforementioned, the IOC will also celebrate **World Olive Day** on Thursday afternoon, dedicating the celebration to the essential role played by women in olive oil. More information regarding the upcoming session of the Council of Members and other related events will be published in the coming weeks.



STANDARDISATION & RESEARCH UNIT: DOCUMENTS ADOPTED DURING THE 117TH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF MEMBERS

With the aim to harmonise international legislation with regard to olive oil and table olives, the IOC's Standardisation and Research Unit performs a wide range of tasks. These involve, among others, carrying out studies on the composition of olives, olive oils and olive-pomace oils, improving methods of analysis, and engaging and discussing with international experts on the standards and limits to be proposed to IOC member countries.

At the 117th session of its Council of Members in June 2023, a number of important documents were adopted following the unanimous position of organoleptic evaluation experts, and subsequently published on the IOC's website:

Guidelines for the accomplishment of requirements of standard ISO 17025 of sensory testing laboratories with particular reference to virgin olive oil COI/T.28/Doc. No 1/Rev.7/2023. At the session, it was agreed to split the document COI/T.28/Doc. No 1 in order to make it more accessible for the heads of panels and laboratory managers. It is now available here.

Internal quality control guidelines for sensory laboratories COI/T.20/Doc. No 17/Rev.1/ 2023, which is now available here.

 $Visit the IOC's \underline{website} \ to learn more about the standards and methods developed by the IOC's Standardisation and Research Unit. \\$



TRIBUTE TO CRISTINO LOBILLO

It was with great sadness that on Wednesday 23 August we bid farewell to Cristino Lobillo (1940 – 2023), a dear member of the IOC family who was part of the group of chemistry experts and an active collaborator with the Organisation for years. A great professional and person, he earned the unanimous respect and appreciation of those who had the good fortune to know and work with him.

Originally from Seville and established in Córdoba, **Cristino Lobillo** held a degree in Chemistry and was a great expert in the olive oil sector and in the sensory analysis of virgin olive oils, as well as a leading expert in various Spanish companies and associations. He dedicated a large part of his professional life to the olive oil sector and actively participated in the "Programme for the improvement of the quality of olive oil in Spain" which ran from 1993 to 1999 and which marked a turning point in the quality of extra virgin olive oil in the country.

He received numerous awards and decorations throughout his outstanding professional career. He was awarded the *Gran Orden del Mérito Agrario* (Grand Order of Agricultural Merit) by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and was also a full member of the Royal Spanish Academy of Gastronomy. In 2005, he received the Doctor Marañón Award for the best scientist in the field of food.



We at the IOC would like to join his family in bidding him

farewell and thanking this great friend and excellent professional for his marvellous work and dedication over the years, with an emphasis not only on his great ability, but also his brilliance, his affable character and his great sense of humour. We will always remember him and he will forever be part of our history.

In memoriam

THE IOC EXTENDS ITS CONDOLENCES TO THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO AND THE STATE OF LIBYA

The IOC wishes to extend its most heartfelt condolences to the **Kingdom of Morocco** for the tragic loss of life and damage caused by the devastating earthquake that shook the country on Friday 8 September. The Organisation also wishes to express its deepest sympathy to the **State of Libya** for the catastrophic and deadly floods that swamped the country on Monday 11 September.

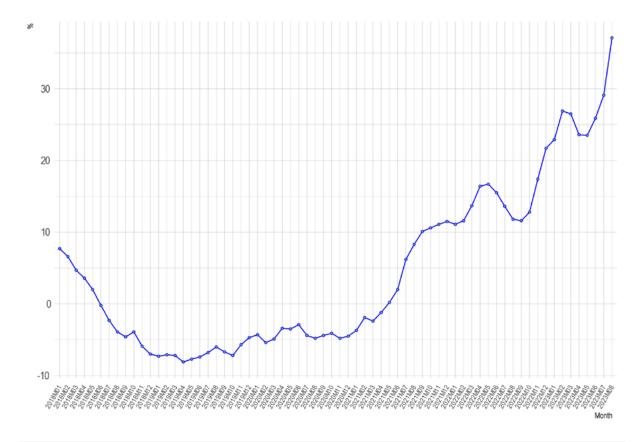
Both countries are essential members of the IOC. The Organisation wishes to reiterate its expression of solidarity and compassion with all of the civilians affected, as well as with those involved in the ongoing indispensable relief efforts.



WORLD MARKET OF OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

HARMONISED INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICES EU-27

In August, the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) for olive oil in the EU-27 was 37.1% higher than in the same month of the previous year.



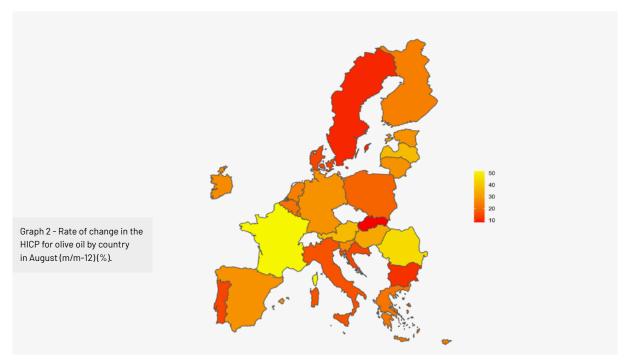
Graph 1 - Trend in the rate of change of the HICP for olive oil in the EU-27(m/m-12)(%).

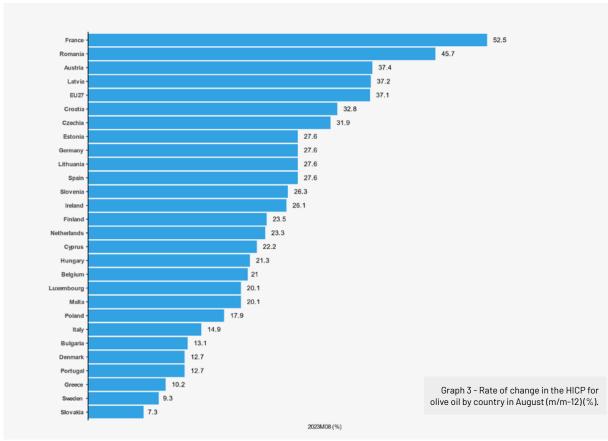
The HICP for the EU-27 stood at 153.4 (2015 = 100) in August, up 5.9% in comparison to the previous month.

By country, the highest increases were recorded in France, Romania and Austria. Slovakia, Sweden and Greece saw the smallest increases. Four countries have rates higher than the EU-27 value.



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I. WORLD TRADE IN OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

1. OLIVE OIL - 2022/23 CROP YEAR

Trade in olive oil and olive-pomace oil on the 8 markets shown in the table below for the 2022/23 crop year (October 2022 - June 2023) fell by 4% in Australia, 6% in Brazil, 10% in Canada, 19% in China, 15% in Japan and 13% in the United States compared to the same period in the previous crop year.

In terms of EU trade during the 2022/23 crop year, intra-EU purchases and extra-EU imports up to June were down by 12% and 13% respectively compared to the same period in the previous crop year.

Olive oil imports (including olive-pomace oils)(
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Importing	October 21	October 22	November 21	November 22	December 21	December 22	January 22	January 23	February 22	February 23	March 22	March 23	April 22	April 23	May 22	May 23	June 22	June 23
country																		
Australia	3385.1	2687.1	2254.0	3071.9	2809.0	2423.4	1942,9	3220,5	2453.0	2141.9	2941.4	2701.6	2366.1	1403.1	2554,0	2526.1	2069.8	1769,9
Brazil	8137,6	8488,4	8895,7	12979,1	7465,7	9772,4	9219,6	7735,8	6199,6	9010,5	9808,9	10174,5	8204,9	4400,5	8910,0	4755,0	8996,3	4097,0
Canada	3195,9	4845,4	3628,6	5634,9	3209,7	3862,3	3997,5	3935,3	5294,5	3476,8	5632,6	4798,4	4200,3	3431,5	4702,0	4221,0	8699,3	4254,5
China	3156,3	3447,5	5464,2	7032,8	8439,6	6035,3	4931,3	3220,7	2931,0	1691,7	2711,2	1548,3	2787,0	2236,9	2210,5	1864,8	3424,0	2177,7
Japan	4567,0	5555,5	6856,5	3476,5	4514,3	4508,3	6201,0	4092,4	3557,2	3838,6	5759,4	4023,0	4871,7	4311,1	4366,3	5696,8	5238,9	3570,1
Russia	3227,1	n.d	3393,8	n.d	2805,4	n.d	2220,1	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d
USA	24667,7	37568,0	32101,5	32131,2	25586,4	24321,7	41415,3	32843,2	31094,2	30683,6	32371,3	38221,3	40530,7	35301,9	52410,9	28790,2	45645,3	22916,1
Extra-EU/27	15418,9	10879,0	9681,7	9374,4	28845,2	29095,3	7075,9	8375,4	14814,2	14024,2	15339,9	11839,4	22021,2	11912,9	17543,8	14031,0	14662,3	17299,7
Intra-EU/27	81263,4	86190,7	98173,2	101980,4	116706,2	116557,8	92792,8	92295,8	113380,0	100229,5	110910,4	95704,9	104439,8	71862,6	125059,5	89864,7	104449,6	81750,2
Total	147019.0	159661.6	170449.1	175681.3	200381.5	196576.5	169796.5	155718.9	179723.6	165096.8	185474.9	169011.3	189421.7	134860.5	217757.0	151749.5	193185.5	137835.3

2. TABLE OLIVES - 2022/23 SEASON

Trade in table olives for the 2022/23 crop year (September 2022 - June 2023) on the markets indicated in the table below increased by 3% in Brazil and by 10% in the United States in comparison to the same period of the previous crop year. Conversely, imports fell by 10% in Australia and Canada.

With regard to trade in table olives within the EU during the 2022/23 crop year, intra-EU purchases up to June rose by 8% and extra-EU imports fell by 6% compared to the same period in the previous crop year.

Table olive imports (t)

Importing	September21	September 22	October 21	October 22	November 21	November 22	December 21	December 22	January 22	January 23	February 22	February 23	March 22	March 23	April 22	April 23	May 22	May 23	June 22	June 23
country																				
Australia	1622,4	2366,1	1120,8	996,5	1277,0	1600,5	1531,5	1547,0	1296,8	1221,0	1565,2	905,6	2275,7	1545,0	1691,3	1301,8	1559,2	1309,5	1500,8	1084,2
Brazil	11770,4	11432,5	10495,0	8957,5	13417,9	10838,6	9812,7	11057,8	5484,3	9922,8	8182,5	10303,0	9275,3	11740,6	8914,5	8302,4	9698,7	11110,7	12389,1	8798,5
Canada	2581,3	3172,0	2396,9	2872,2	3150,3	3459,8	3032,9	2661,1	3320,0	2827,9	2403,6	1759,7	2837,2	2379,2	2996,2	2567,4	3727,7	2489,7	3570,4	2775,3
USA	12274,1	14272,0	11534,0	13449,3	10713,6	17146,0	12419,3	13606,8	11211,4	12173,9	9804,7	12385,0	12150,6	12511,0	10494,0	14477,2	14041,0	11350,5	17614,9	12892,1
Extra-EU/27	8335.4	8262.9	8858.6	9177.3	9328.5	8683.8	8114.0	8982.9	8747.8	8453.0	9371.0	7658.0	11235.7	10663.5	11548.2	9369.1	10045.3	9934.3	10650.8	9731.4
Intra-EU/27	28211,0	28224.8	33305,3	50645,7	39645,5	31851,5	26423.6	32850,1	22988,4	23537,5	24904,0	24763,0	25720,4	32287,7	25529,0	28569,7	33323,4	32090,1	33044.8	31899,1
Total	64794,6	67730,2	67710,6	86098,4	77532,7	73580,1	61334,0	70705,7	53048,6	58136,0	56231,0	57774,3	63494,8	71127,0	61173,2	64587,5	72395,2	68284,8	78770,8	67180,6

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.

II. PRODUCER PRICES - OLIVE OILS

Monthly price trends for extra virgin and refined olive oil are shown in graph 1.

Extra virgin olive oil - The producer price for this category in **Spain** reached €8.52/kg during the week of 11 to 17 September 2023, an increase of 116.5% compared to the same period in the previous crop year.

Italy - The producer price for extra virgin olive oil was €9.08/kg in the week from 11 to 17 September 2023, an increase of 78.7% compared to the same period last year.

Greece - During the week of 11 to 17 September 2023, extra virgin olive oil was trading at €7.45/kg, an increase of 122.4% compared to the same period in the previous crop year.

Tunisia - The price for this category was €7.53/kg in the second week of July 2023.

Refined olive oil: The producer price for this category was €7.47/kg in Spain in the week from 11 to 17 September 2023, an increase of 100.3% on the same period in the previous crop year. Italian data for this category has not been available since the end of December 2017.

The difference between the price of extra virgin olive oil (ϵ 8.52/kg) and the price of refined olive oil (ϵ 7.47/kg) in Spain is ϵ 1.05/kg.

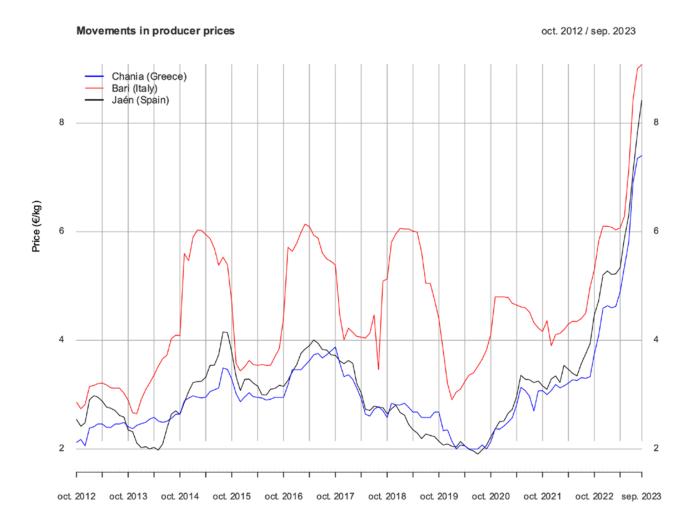
 $\underline{https://www.internationaloliveoil.org/what-we-do/economic-affairs-promotion-unit/\#prices}$

 $\underline{https://www.internationaloliveoil.org/\ what-we-do/economic-affairs-promotion-unit/\#exports}$

CHANGE IN PRODUCER PRICES

EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

Average monthly prices





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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