



*R&D Insights* contains the latest levy-funded R&D project updates, research findings and related industry resources, which all happen under the Hort Innovation Olive Fund.

Hort Innovation partners with leading service providers to complete a range of R&D projects to ensure the long-term sustainability and profitability of the olive industry.



Centrally based geographically, the river city of Albury combines regional hospitality with modern conference facilities and a wide range of accommodation options.

## 2019 Conference provides healthy industry focus

**Healthy groves and healthy businesses are the focus of this year's AOA National Olive Industry Conference & Exhibition, being held in Albury, New South Wales on 17-19 October.**

AOA CEO Greg Seymour said the theme *Healthy groves, healthy business* reflects the increasing awareness that producing a great crop and high-value olive products starts, quite literally, from the ground up.

"We've come a long way from the days of just using increased inputs to facilitate production," he said.

"We know now that achieving a healthy, viable business starts by first ensuring that your trees are healthy, along with your soil and the ecosystem they're growing in. Growers play a huge role in that and are increasingly aware that by introducing

new and better practices in the grove, they can achieve a lot more with a lot less.

"That's just one part of a healthy business, along with consistent quality, good promotion and appropriate marketing strategies. You also can't run a successful business if you're not in good health yourself, both physically and mentally.

"So the plenary program will cover a wide range of relevant topics, including grower health, encompassing all aspects of what goes into achieving a healthy olive business."

### **Practical, interactive learning**

AOA CEO Greg Seymour said the feedback provided by 2018 delegates formed the basis for this year's planning, including the continuing focus on practical sessions and

interactive learning experiences.

"We had very positive feedback about all aspects of the conference, and also comments on some areas where we can improve. So we'll be taking the best of Wagga to Albury, and making improvements where we it was pointed out it could get better," he said.

"The emphasis will be on lots of practical stuff, including a field trip on Friday to a world-class farming establishment for some great interactive learning. And we'll be doing the same on the Saturday, with another post-plenary optional program of field and general interest visits, and interactive workshops on things like sensory tasting and how to 'do' social media. Last year's optional activity program was incredibly popular and I'm sure this one will be as well."



### Diverse program

The conference plenary program covers a diverse range of industry issues and interests, from climate change, a look at the Macadamia industry's improvement through benchmarking, managing frost, healthy soils and retailing at the grove door.



**Wednesday, 16 October – AOA AGM, followed by Cocktail Welcome Function & Exhibition Opening**

**Thursday, 17 October – Conference, followed by Conference Dinner**

**Friday, 18 October – Conference, followed by AIOA Presentation Dinner**

**Saturday, 19 October – Optional Workshop and Field Visit Program**

There's also a detailed overview of the "state of the market", updates on the olive levy IPDM, Food service and *OliveCare*® projects, the field visit to the organic olive grove at the TAFE-run National Environment Centre, and a presentation about looking after yourself – titled by Seymour "It's all about you".

"So for people asking 'What am I going to get out of going?', the answer is: it's a smorgasbord approach with something for everything. There'll be ample

opportunities to find out about lots of things you've wondered about and lots more you've never thought of, through both the structured learning and also what you hear from other people.

"All of that will happen in a fantastic facility, in the centre of a vibrant, welcoming town that's easy to get around. There's a real buzz happening around it already, with strong interest from exhibitors, and I sense that 2019 is going to be a really special conference."

### Value-added event

The event includes a Conference Dinner on the evening of 18 October - one of the very popular new inclusions to last year's event - and the highlight celebration on the olive industry calendar, the Australian International Olive Awards Gala Dinner, on the Friday evening at the conclusion of the Conference program.

The Australian Olive Association will also hold its 2018 Annual General Meeting in conjunction with the Conference, scheduled for Wednesday 17 October from 4-6pm. This will be followed by a cocktail welcome function and the official Exhibition Opening, where delegates will be introduced to the exhibitors and their services.

Registrations will open in July via the Conference website - [www.nationalconference.com.au](http://www.nationalconference.com.au) - when the final program will also be published.

Speaker presentations and videos from the 2018 Conference are also available on the website. Take a look - they'll no doubt provide even more inspiration to attend, learn and network at this year's event.



### A taste of wisdom shared ...

**One of the most important elements of the annual Conference program is the detailed information shared by the expert presenters, like this advice on table olive production issues from Linda Costa.**

**"My observation during the conference is that the persisting challenge for those in the table olive industry is the softening of fruit during processing.**

**"This can be avoided by correct processing techniques for most cultivars. The exception is during the production of black ripe Manzanilla olives: the best way to prevent softening of these olives is to harvest during a very short window period, just as they darken up. This is indeed a sizable challenge in large orchards.**

**"Manzanilla fruit is ideal for green ripe processing - which is the traditional application of this cultivar."**

**Where do you find nuanced expert information like that – at the annual AOA National Conference & Exhibition!**

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**The conference is facilitated through the project 'National olive industry conference and trade exhibition' (OL16010), funded by Hort Innovation using olive R&D levy funds and contributions from the Australian Olive Association and the Australian Government.**



Presenter Pablo Canamasas stressed the need to evaluate fruit and work specifically with what you've got.



Salute Oliva's Peter Eicher took participants through soil moisture monitoring, an important element of grove management for optimal fruit quality.

## Processing workshop puts theory into action

**The key to maximising oil yield is simple: grow great olives, time your harvest well and work specifically with the fruit you've got.**

That was the take home message of the AOA Olive Oil Processing Workshop, held in April in Boort, Victoria. Presented by international processing consultant Pablo Canamasas and award-winning producers Peter and Marlies Eicher of Salute Oliva, the comprehensive two-day course honed in on the parameters affecting processing quality, from grove management for optimal fruit quality to best-practice processing and storage.

### The program

On day one Canamasas covered the theory, taking participants through the various stages of processing and how each can affect the final result. He stressed the importance of fruit preparation, starting with well-grown olives and then ensuring optimal picking time: fruit moisture content is a crucial factor, as is fruit temperature at processing stage, with night harvesting for early

morning processing recommended where possible.

The second day put that theory into action at the Eichers' Salute Oliva processing plant. The course participants observed – and assisted with – two consecutive processing trials, each using Arbequina fruit from the same Boundary Bend grove.

The first trial was done without processing aids and the high fruit moisture level (60.1%) resulted in a yield of just 10.9%. In the second trial talc and enzymes were added, along with changes to the grid size (from 6mm to 5mm), temperature (from 28C to 29C) and processing speed (from 600kg/h to 530kg/h). Those minor adjustments produced a yield of 12.6% and 64kg of oil - an increase of more than 15% and 9kg of oil – equating to an impressive 92% extraction of the 13.7% fruit oil content.

### The art of processing

Workshop participant Liz Bouzoudis said the trial opened her eyes to the 'art' involved in processing.

"It demonstrated that it's not just a case of getting your olives in the machine and turning it on: you really have to investigate your fruit and then work with what you've got," she said.

"For example, the maturity index is one factor that helps you decide whether you add processing aids, and the temperature and moisture content of the olives should be considered when setting processing speeds and temperatures. If you adjust for all the variables that were outlined in the course, it ensures you're maximising the processing yield you achieve from each batch.

"Which means you're also maximising the productivity in your grove. If you pick at the wrong time and the olives aren't quite ready, by adjusting your processing you can at least maximise the end yield.

"It's a bit of an art but the results of the second trial confirmed Pablo's teachings, and showed that a few minor adjustments make a huge difference in terms of your output."



#### Missed out?

You're not alone, as places at the Boort workshop were in hot demand and booked out in a flash. If you're keen to attend the next one, register your interest now and get an early heads-up to ensure you don't miss out. Email AOA Administration Manager Liz Bouzoudis at [secretariat@australianolives.com.au](mailto:secretariat@australianolives.com.au).



The Olive Nest's Haydn Harrison (left) and Richard Harrison (right) got a few additional questions answered over a drink with presenters Peter and Marlies Eicher at the post-workshop wind-down.

#### Practical application

The Olive Nest & 1838 Wines owner Haydn Harrison drove from Mudgee for the course and said the value he got out of it was "huge".

"It was fantastic. A lot of the time you walk away from training and say 'that was pretty ordinary' but I took heaps away from it and we've already been able to achieve a significant outcome from what I learned," he said.

Harrison said he'd never heard about enzymes before and was "blown away" when he saw the difference they made to the oil yield. So he ordered some immediately and, as the delivery hadn't arrived when they started harvesting, conducted his own comparative trial. With similarly impressive results.

"I got 15.5% the first time around and 17.8% the second time using enzymes, so 2.3% more and a 15% better yield. And quantity-wise, we got about 180L extra - although we lost some when the press broke down," he said.

"We also found that our water usage was reduced by around 50%: we're two-phase so we usually have to put water through the whole process but because it broke the fruit down better and pulled the moisture out, I only needed to use water in the centrifuge not the malaxer.

"I was really surprised with what it did, and pretty impressed."

He's even more impressed with what that means in dollar terms.

"We can make \$40/L through our cellar door, so that 180L extra is \$7200 of additional income, from using only part of a \$260 outlay.

"We're boutique here – it's just my wife Erika and me - and we don't sell in bulk, just through the cellar door, so that increased production is incredibly valuable in terms of income to a small operation like ours.

"We need to maximise what we can get from our 1350 trees and the enzymes worked beautifully in doing that. We're now right up there with the higher yielding groves in the area and, given how little they cost, it's a no-brainer."

#### Questions, answers ... and confidence

Harrison said the workshop provided everything he needed to lift his processing game – and much more.

"It all stems from the workshop; I wouldn't have done it without it," he said.

"We got the enzymes at 4.30 and I started pressing with them at 5.30 that night. I'd gained enough knowledge and confidence to do it myself, and I was confident that it would work.

"And it wasn't just what I'd learned and seen, it was also all the questions I'd been able to ask. Pablo had the answer to every question that was put – and people asked a lot of questions – and he was able to explain it so that we all understood it. Even the technical stuff made sense. He also got challenged on a few

things and he took a lot of time to clarify why it is and how it was. The first day ran over because there were so many questions and they just took as much time as was needed to make sure they were all answered.

"I asked a lot about irrigation and even about companion cropping – and then I had a lot more questions answered by talking later with Peter and Marlies. They were incredibly open with their knowledge and information.

"The value of the AOA running this sort of workshop is huge. I never would have taken the risk and attempted to do what I've just done, and we'll definitely be doing other courses in the future."

#### More learning to come

Course presenters Pablo Canamasas and Peter and Marlies Eicher prepared a breakdown of the two processing tests carried out during the course, detailing all operational and input variations. We'll bring you all the information, along with an economic analysis based on the comparative yield results, in a feature R&D article in *Olivegrower & Processor*.

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 This project has been funded by Hort Innovation, using the Hort Innovation olive research and development levy, co-investment from the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government.

# Trainee chefs now AEVOO aware - and confident

The two-year *Olive oil in food service project* has come to a conclusion and the results are exciting, with knowledge around EVOO almost doubling among the student audience.

Utilising resources created specifically for trainee chefs, the levy-funded project took the facts and messages about quality Australian EVOO to the next wave of new young chefs – culinary students at TAFE colleges across Victoria and New South Wales. Fact sheets, videos and presentations were created by project partner Nutrition Australia, which worked directly with TAFE management and teachers to include them in lesson plans.

**PROJECT NAME:** *Olive oil in food service program (OL16004)*

**PROJECT AIM:** To increase awareness of Australian extra virgin olive oil among trainee chefs and culinary school students

**PROJECT PARTNER:** Nutrition Australia, Vic Division

**FUNDING:** Hort Innovation Olive Fund

**PROJECT STATUS:** Completed

**KEY OUTCOMES:**

- Resources have been embedded within the TAFE Certificate III in Commercial Cookery course in NSW and VIC
- Post-learning engagement, 92% of students reported an awareness about Australian EVOO of “good” or “excellent”
- Post-learning engagement, 89% of students reported they are now “confident” or “very confident” to use AEVOO
- The outcome of improved knowledge and confidence of trainee chefs/cooks at participating institutes about the attributes, benefits and uses of AEVOO was successfully achieved



## TAFE engagement

Project co-ordinator Aranya Changkaoprom said the relationship with TAFE was integral to the project’s success.

“Throughout the lifespan of the project we engaged with six TAFE colleges to take part in the Olive Oil Food Service Program, three in Victoria and three in New South Wales,” she said.

“To ensure longevity of the project, we encouraged the TAFE colleges to embed the resources within their curriculum so that trainee chefs would have access to them in future. TAFE teachers were also invited to showcase the videos within their classes and to collect quantitative monitoring data via in-class surveys.

“This allowed us to evaluate the outcomes of the project learning aims from both student and teacher perspectives.”

## Evaluation results

Students across three different TAFE colleges completed the in-class survey, which aimed to measure the extent to which increased knowledge of Australian EVOO (AEVOO) amongst trainee chefs had been achieved. Students were provided with a number of statements about AEVOO and asked to rate their awareness of the concepts both before watching the videos and straight after.

The statements included:

- Versatility of AEVOO in cooking
- Smoke point of AEVOO



### Recommendations

Ms Changkaoprom said a number of recommendations have resulted from the *Olive oil in food service program*. These include:

- supplementing the educational resources with activities for trainee chefs such as grove tours, competitions and in-class tastings
- partnering with peak bodies within food service to continue promotion of the resources
- partnering with resource providers that sell their content for the Certificate III in Commercial Cookery course to TAFE colleges, as a cost-effective and time-efficient way of embedding the resources and increasing reach
- continued promotion via social media
- explore other promotion opportunities such as trade exhibition attendances, marketing AEVOO through food service distributors, and creating content for food service publications

Each student was also asked to rate their confidence to:

- Cook or fry with AEVOO
- Use AEVOO in both savoury and sweet dishes

# OLIVE OIL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM SUMMARY REPORT

## OL16004

### BACKGROUND

A significant opportunity was identified by Hort Innovation to better inform stakeholders in the food service sector about the specific attributes, properties, benefits and uses of Australian extra virgin olive oil (AEVOO). This is due to a profound lack of knowledge and misconceptions in the Australian food sector about the benefits of using and consuming AEVOO over imported or alternative products. Lack of knowledge includes how the product is produced, variety of taste profiles, health benefits, storage and use in cooking and food preparation.

The overall outcomes of this project aimed to meet Hort Innovation's Strategy 2.3 a desire to ensure key information about the product is clearly and widely communicated to industry and pipeline customers through "Education of customers, especially chefs and the food service industry, about the health benefits of olive oil and how to cook with Australian extra virgin olive oil".

### AIM

- To educate and increase the knowledge of AEVOO with student chefs in Victoria and New South Wales (NSW).

### TIMELINE

- 2 year project (May 2017 - May 2019)

### TARGET GROUP

- Student chefs within their learning environment (i.e. TAFE colleges)
- Established chefs working in food service

### METHODOLOGY

Nutrition Australia undertook the following project methodology:

- Year 1 - Research and scope food service industry use of olive oil including barriers and drivers plus development of educational resources (videos and factsheets).
- Year 2 - Disseminate educational resources to communicate messages to culinary and or hospitality students at TAFE colleges, in Victoria and NSW. Conduct monitoring and evaluation to measure project performance and effectiveness.



- And use AEVOO as a dressing

The results found there was also a clear shift in students reporting on their confidence to use Australian EVOO, increasing almost two-fold after watching the videos. The analysis showed students went from being "not confident at all" or "somewhat confident" (an average 46% of students) to the majority being "confident" or "very confident" (an average 89% of students).

"In summary, the intermediate outcome of improved knowledge and confidence of trainee chefs/cooks at participating institutes about the attributes, benefits and uses of AEVOO was successfully achieved in the *Olive oil in food service program*," Ms Changkaoprom said.

"Results from the teacher phone

interviews and email questionnaire were also generally positive, and they provided some great suggestions for future engagement with trainee chefs.

"Overall teachers found the videos "informative", "relevant" and "engaging". They had no suggestions on improving the videos and fact sheets but did suggest supplementing them with a practical component, as trainee chefs are used to being more hands-on. Naturally we think that's a great idea and we hope that can happen into the future.

"Putting all of the feedback and findings together, these results are a fantastic outcome of both the education resources and the project overall."

# Explore sensory skills and quality parameters at Tastebook™ / OliveCare® workshops

**Identifying flavours and aromas in extra virgin olive oil and table olives is an art – and also sometimes a science. You know it tastes good, or bad, but it's often hard to pinpoint exactly what IT is among all those other flavours and aromas – and then you have to find the right descriptor. And once you've got a handle on just what it is you're experiencing, do you actually know how it got there?**

The answers to these conundrums and so much more are on offer at the program of *TasteBook™* and *OliveCare®* regional workshops, being held across the country over the next six months.

Run by NSW DPI Sensory and Consumer Science Researcher Dr Soumi Paul Mukhopadhyay and *OliveCare®* Administrator Peter McFarlane, the sensory workshops will help you learn how to recognise – and importantly, describe - the diverse flavour, aroma and taste attributes of Australian EVOO and table olives. They'll also show you what sets award winners apart from the rest, and explore the quality practices which can determine whether your oil is just olive oil or EVOO and how to look after it.

## Learning extension

Dr Mukhopadhyay said the joint workshop is unique in that it combines the two olive levy projects for an even greater learning opportunity.

“This project is an extension of the quarterly *Tastebook™* program and the *OliveCare® Code of Best Practice* program, providing face-to-face two-way communication where people can learn from each other,” she said.

“And rather than doing separate consumer workshops, *Tastebook™* and grower workshops, etc, it's all happening under the one program, bringing together the learning

and then sharing that learning with everyone.

“It'll be really inclusive, bringing together newcomers, experienced and the very experienced, with everyone sharing both their knowledge and their questions.”

## Talking the talk

One of the main aims of the project, Dr Mukhopadhyay said, is creating a common ground around sensory and quality descriptors.

“Everyone will start from the same level, so that at the end of the workshop everyone is also on the same level. They'll know how to properly taste an olive oil and an olive, they'll understand the difference between EVOO and olive oil, gold and silver quality, a medal-winning table olive and an ordinary one, and they'll all be using the same language when they talk about them.

“Growers and producers know how good their oil and olives are but unless you can describe how good they are in a language that others can also understand, it's hard to get that message out to your target audience – in this case, the consumers we want to buy and enjoy our local products.

“So it's about being comfortable communicating what you taste in a way which you know others also understand and appreciate, with the *OliveCare®* learning providing the crucial information about quality, how to achieve it and how to maintain it and how to maintain it.

“The end game is to ensure that Australian product is superior quality and then to ensure that message is being communicated from the paddock to the plate, through the whole supply chain.

## Workshop program

Each workshop runs from 9am-5pm, with *Tastebook™* sensory training in



## Workshop schedule

- **June**  
**Friday, 14 June – Geelong VIC**  
**Sunday, 16 June – Wangaratta VI**  
**Monday, 30 June – Wagga NSW**
- **August**  
**(Two workshops) WA – details TBC**
- **September**  
**Friday, 20 September –**  
**Roseworthy SA**
- **October**  
**Hunter Valley, NSW – details TBC**
- **November**  
**(Two workshops) Tasmania –**  
**details TBC**  
**Toowoomba, QLD – details TBC**

the morning and *OliveCare®* quality training after lunch. Participants are then invited to join the presenters a local venue for refreshments and/or a meal, providing an additional opportunity for one-on-one questions and discussion.

Workshop participants will gain an understanding of:

- how to undertake sensory evaluation of olive oil and table olives
- varietal and regional sensory profile differences

- the objectives of the *OliveCare*<sup>®</sup> *Code of Best Practice* program
- olive oil chemistry and testing - what we test for and why?
- how to read an EVOO laboratory test report
- the purpose of EVOO 'freshness testing'
- how to determine the potential shelf life of EVOO
- the risk factors that accelerate the breakdown of EVOO
- how to recognise olive oil defects and their causes
- how to access *OliveCare*<sup>®</sup> web based e-learning resources
- how to prepare a food quality plan for EVOO or table olives.

Each workshop also features presentations by regional experts and medal-winning producers, so check out the program for your workshop when you book.

#### Who's invited?

Providing hands-on, interactive learning for participants across all levels of industry knowledge and experience, the workshop will benefit olive growers and processors, olive oil judges and with anyone simply wanting to gain a better appreciation of the flavour nuances of EVOO and table olives.

The 11-session workshop series is being held in regional and capital cities across Australia between May and November this year. The cost for the full-day program is just \$40 for levy payers and \$50 non-levy payers, including morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

See the updated schedule of

workshops and register on-line through Eventbrite on the OliveBiz website: [www.olivebiz.com.au/events](http://www.olivebiz.com.au/events).

For more information contact Dr Soumi Paul Mukhopadhyay on 0409 283 581 or via email at [soumi.paul.mukhopadhyay@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:soumi.paul.mukhopadhyay@dpi.nsw.gov.au).

**This workshop program has been funded by Hort Innovation, using the Hort Innovation olive research and development levy, co-investment from the NSW Department of Primary Industries, the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government. Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture.**



#### Research Recap

**PROJECT NAME:** Australian Olive Industry Sensory Training (OL17003)

**PROJECT AIM:** To enable recognition and communication of the diverse flavour, aroma and taste attributes of Australian EVOO and table olives, and to promote practices which ensure that Australian product is consistently of superior quality

**PROJECT PARTNER:** NSW Department of Primary Industries

**PROJECT FUNDING:** Hort Innovation Olive Fund

**PROJECT DURATION:** One year

## Olive Fund snapshot

**As a levy payer, the Hort Innovation Olive Fund is your R&D fund, invested along with Australian Government and AOA contributions, into initiatives to help growers be as productive and profitable as possible.**

It's important that all stakeholders know what their levy dollars are being used for – and just as importantly, what they're achieving for the industry. Not everyone has time to read the fine print, so here's a snapshot of current Olive Fund investment activity:

- Currently underway: 12+ investments
- Ready for you to use: 8+ resources and reports
- Levy collected in 2017/18: \$414,642
- Invested in R&D in 2017/18: \$551,750
- Potential impact of industry SIP: \$25 million

That's a pretty good return on investment!

Find olive industry resources to help your business grow

You can access research reports, publications, fact sheets and more relating to Olive Fund R&D activity

in the Growers section of the Hort Innovation website [www.horticulture.com.au/growers/olive-fund/](http://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/olive-fund/)

#### Learn more about the Olive Fund

And if you want to know more about the Olive Fund, there's an overview of how it works and how it's managed here <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/olive-fund/fund-management/>. You can also download the Olive Fund 2017/18 Annual Report, the Olive Fund Strategic Investment Plan (full and At A Glance versions) and 2017/18 financial documents including R&D project expenditure and the financial operating statement.