



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.

Webinars keep the knowledge-sharing coming

COVID-19 restrictions have brought a lot of changes and for our industry, one was the unfortunate postponement of the AOA's national Healthy Soils Field Day program and Boort Processing Workshop.

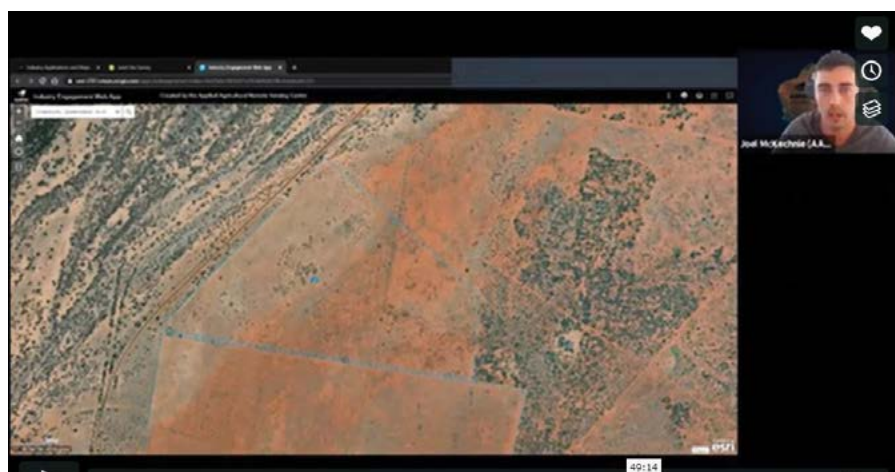
While we couldn't gather in person, the AOA ensured the momentum of the industry's ongoing interactive knowledge-sharing program was maintained via a webinar series, covering a range of productivity and profitability topics directly affecting Australian olive growers and producers.

Utilising the user-friendly Zoom online platform, the events were held from May through to early September. Each ran for approximately an hour - on occasion longer when enthusiasm and questions abounded - with an expert presentation followed by live Q&A and discussion. Participation was free, open to all levy payers and interested industry members.

The webinars were also recorded and made available on the *OliveBiz* website, enabling access for those who couldn't make it live and the opportunity for ongoing reference and review by event participants.

Remote sensing project

The series kicked off with the first three sessions in the productivity and profitability webinar series, covering the application of cutting-edge remote sensing in the Australian olive industry.



Members of the olive industry remote sensing research team provided an overview of the *Olive Remote Sensing Project*, explaining and discussing the technologies and uses of aerial, ground and NIR sensing.

The second webinar provided an update on the mapping component of the project, explaining the benefits of a national olive map and providing a live demonstration on how to enter the data for your grove.

The third session then provided an overview on grove irrigation trials being undertaken as part the project, along with associated oil accumulation results.

Enthusiastic response

Registrations were strong and saw industry members across the country learn about the research, the new technologies being utilised and the

opportunities they present for olive growers now and into the future.

The session covering the Boundary Bend irrigation testing project was particularly well attended, with participants keen to see further results and progress as the project continues. Even more remarkable was the response to the national mapping information, which saw 59 new land use surveys uploaded in the following hours – a 75% increase in the existing information database.

Digital marketing

Next up was the *Digital Marketing* series, presented by Lauren Hamilton from Digital Narrative – a 'big tick' presenter and workshop facilitator at the 2019 National Conference.

Designed for producers looking into an online presence and those wanting to sharpen their online marketing

skills, the series was particularly relevant and timely: the COVID-19 induced shut-down of food service and farmers markets had just hit and many were scrambling to adapt their sales models to a contact-free mode.

Hamilton said the questions posed during the webinars showed the varied situations of the attendees but that a few common topics emerged.

“There was a lot of interest in how to convert what you’ve already got, to do what you need to do now,” she said.

“Most really wanted to retrofit their existing sites to perform in these new ways – although that’s not always possible – so we explored the possibilities of making whatever website you have fit for purpose.

“Interestingly, there was a bit of pushback about the discussions around Shopify, although it’s often the most cost-effective option. It’s actually the perfect solution if all you need to do is sell stuff online and you don’t have a website. The main thing is that they now know what it is and how it works, and can make an informed decision as to whether it’s right for them.

“We also talked about paid Facebook and Google ads, and that it’s better to get a professional to do it. I definitely got the sense that that part is quite challenging for producers – as it is for me, and I have to do it every day.

“By the end I felt that people got a good handle on the various options and how they may or may not suit their businesses. Some spoke to me afterwards about more specific issues and I could tell that they now understood where their gaps were.

“That was what we were aiming for: to allow people to identify those gaps and say ‘I don’t have that and that’s okay’ or ‘I’m missing this piece of the puzzle and now I know how to get it.’”

Feedback confirmed the success of Hamilton’s webinars, with attendees saying they gained “valuable high-quality information” and guidance in how to go about refining or setting up their own offerings.

Processing

The webinar series then moved to production issues, with a live cross to international industry consultant



Pablo Canamasas in Argentina for an *Evaluation of Processing Aids for Olive Oil Extraction & Quality Improvement*.

Covering one segment of the postponed Boort Processing Workshop, the webinar gave attendees the low-down on methods for increasing processing efficiency. In a comprehensive presentation, Canamasas combined the facts and figures with experiential insight, turning a complex topic into useful – and, importantly, usable – practical information.

Feedback is best summed up by this attendee:

“Great format and well run. Excellent presenter: Pablo is able to explain the whys and hows, and also provide the technical/scientific background information, all in language which makes sense to the average person. An amazing opportunity for all in the industry to learn more about the process and science of processing from an international expert - and for free! Incredible.”

Table olives

Continuing on the production theme, the next webinar was *Talking Table Olives*, presented by South African expert Linda Costa. The session followed up on Costa’s highly successful national table olive workshop tour, held earlier this year, facilitating discussion around producers’ experiences with current ferments.

With an array of questions posed both before and during the presentation, and enthusiastic input from the 60-plus participants, it was a dynamic session of shared information and problem-solving. Not surprisingly, feedback was

outstanding, with Costa’s warm, engaging style and limitless knowledge seeing many rate the webinar among the best they’d attended.

IPDM project resources

The series then wrapped up on 1 September with *New IPDM Project Resources and How to Access Them*. Pest and disease experts Dr Robert Spooner-Hart and Len Tesoriero showcased the outputs from the current levy R&D project *An integrated pest and disease management extension program for the olive industry (OL17001)*, presenting resources including on-line tutorials on IPDM theory and practice, tutorials and flyers on key olive pests and diseases, the revised Field Guide to Olive Pests, Disorders and Diseases in Australia; and the new Olive IPDM Manual, and how to access them.

The ‘hot topic’ session was well attended, ensuring growers are up-to-date with the latest practical information on implementing integrated pest and disease management (IPDM) strategies in their groves.

Access and/or re-visit

The webinar recordings and IPDM resources are now available on the *OliveBiz* website - www.olivebiz.com.au - under the *Projects* dropdown.

The AOA productivity and profitability webinar series is part of the project Australian olive industry communications and extension program (OL18000), funded by Hort Innovation using the olive levy research and development levy, co-investment from the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government.

New handbook provides data on the year in horticulture

The latest edition of the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook is now available, providing comprehensive and contemporary data on all sectors of the Australian horticulture industry for the year ending June 2019.

The handbook features data and insights relating to production, international trade, processing volumes and fresh market distribution for 75 different horticultural categories.

Highlights

The data in the latest edition shows that in 2018/19, the horticulture sector recorded its highest total production value to date, at \$14.4 billion.

Overall sector highlights include:

- seven years of consecutive growth
- industry growth of 8.4%, a \$1.1 billion annual increase on 2017/18
- average compound annual growth rate over the last five years of 5.6% - total 31%

Fruit category statistics

The handbook covers four industry category sections - Vegetables, Fruit (including olives) Nuts, and Other horticulture, with a fifth section focussed on Trade Analysis. Major relevant statistics for the Fruit category include:

Horticultural imports

For the year ending June 2019 Australia imported \$2.87B worth of horticultural products. Processed fruit (excluding wine grapes) was the greatest value import category (\$1062M and 32%), with olives and olive oil accounting for almost a quarter of that value (\$254.9M).

Horticultural exports

In contrast, processed fruit accounted for only 6% and \$175.6M of Australia's \$2.92B in horticultural exports in the same year, with olives and olive oil comprising less than 10% of the total at \$16.6M.

Production volume

Fruit production accounted for 2,793,432T of the total Horticultural Production figure of 6,731,638T. Olives were the seventh highest fruit crop by tonnage (125T), after oranges, bananas, apples, table grapes, watermelon and mandarins, and accounted for almost half of the combined Fruit for Processing category (excluding table grapes).

Production value (rounded to nearest M)

At \$5,525M, fruit production accounted for more than a third of the total horticultural products value of \$14,367M. Of that, \$210M was for Fruit for Processing, with olive production comprising more than three-quarters of the total value at \$155M.

Interestingly, of the seven largest fruit crops by tonnage above, olives were the fifth highest in terms of value per ton and well ahead of both oranges and watermelons:

Product	Production volume	Production value	\$/T
table grapes	208,000T	\$693M	\$3332/T
mandarins	157,000T	\$299M	\$1904/T
bananas	372,000T	\$595M	\$1599/T
apples	310,000T	\$512M	\$1562/T
olives	125,000T	\$155M	\$1240/T
oranges	528,000T	\$399M	\$756/T
watermelons	230,000T	\$107M	\$465/T

Olives Overview

The final four pages of the Fruit category section are the Olives Overview, providing a snapshot of Australian olive industry for the 2018-1019 year and further figures including:

- of the 125,000 T of fresh olives produced, 95% or 118,750 were extracted for oil
- 19,736T of oil was produced, equivalent to 21.6 million litres of olive oil with an estimated average olive oil extraction rate was 16.64%
- wholesale value of oil produced was \$324M
- average weighted wholesale national price for EVOO was \$6.40/kg
- wholesale value of the table olives produced was \$101M
- Australia imported 33,274T of olive oil, valued at \$185M
- consumption of olive oil per capita, based on volume supplied, was 2.1kg.

Other information

Additional data includes a table showing olive production volume and value, exports, imports and fresh supply for the current and previous two years; production and seasonality data by state; and a profile of exports and imports of olive oil over the last five financial years.

Access the handbook

Now published online, updated features of the current edition include a new interactive dashboard providing improved search functionality and user preferences. The original hard copy format of the handbook is also available for this edition through separate downloadable PDF documents covering four category sections of the current edition: Vegetables, Fruit (including olives) Nuts, and Others.

The Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook 2018-19 was produced by the across-industry levy investment project Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook 2018-19 to 2020-21 (HA18002).

GPs embrace EVOO for preventative cardiology

The Olive Wellness Institute (OWI) is one of our industry's greatest assets, promoting the health benefits of olive products via its educative website and a range of ongoing activities. Getting the word - and scientific facts - out to health professionals is a major part of their work, and in July the Institute supported a free national webcast as part of the Healthed Hot Topic Series.

Run specifically for healthcare professionals, the unique podcast series features some of Australia's leading clinical experts, talking on topics that are both practical and important to Australian GPs.

The 14 July webcast featured four speakers on wide-ranging healthcare topics, headed by Olive Oil, Lipids and Cardiovascular Risk presented by Dr Jason Kaplan. Dr Kaplan is a Specialist Cardiologist and Physician, currently appointed as Clinical Lead of Cardiovascular and Respiratory Medicine at Macquarie University, with a self-confessed "passion for preventative cardiology".

Science and practice

In his presentation Dr Kaplan summarised the science around the benefits of olive oil and shared the results of studies confirming the positive effects on inflammation, endothelial function, hypertension, insulin sensitivity, diabetes and other conditions. In particular, he highlighted the specific benefits for lipid profile and cardiovascular risk, and provided practical advice on how to implement the beneficial outcomes of olive oil consumption in real life.

"Sell-out" session

OWI General Manager Sarah Gray said the response to the webinar was "amazing", with more than 1000 healthcare professionals logging in for the session.

"We thought it would be a popular topic but we were still surprised when we saw that 1053 people attended the session," she said.

"Of those, 79% were GPs, so that's a

lot of doctors interested in learning more about how EVOO can help their patients.

"The feedback was incredibly positive too. Nearly 80% said that they now feel comfortable recommending EVOO for lipid problems like high cholesterol, while over 90% said they now plan to recommend EVOO as a dietary intervention for cardiovascular disease.

"That's now a lot of doctors confident in using EVOO as a part of their clinical treatment mix."

Momentum continues

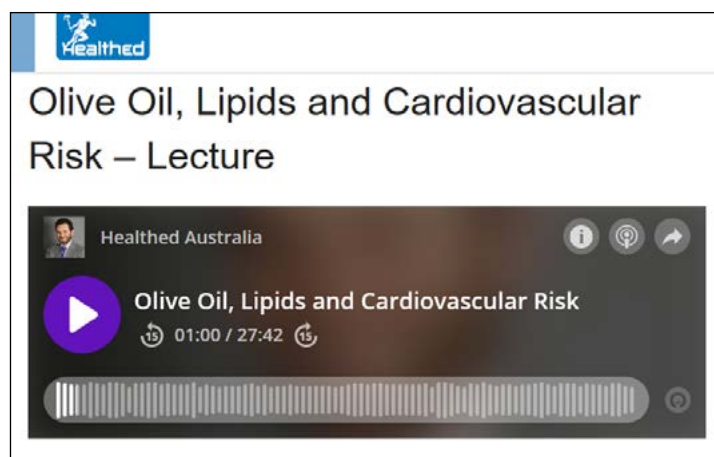
And the enthusiasm for EVOO and its healthy properties has continued post-event.

"We had 254 GPs opt in to our database from the event. Each of them will receive an OWI sample bottle - so no doubt they'll be even bigger fans once they try it," Gray said.

"The session is also now available as a podcast and 994 people have currently downloaded and played it since the webinar.

"That's more than 2000 'listens' to the information all-up, and hopefully 2000-plus health professionals now looking at or actively recommending fresh, Australian EVOO as part of their ongoing patient care."

Access Dr Kaplan's session podcast and all of the Olive Wellness Institute resources at www.olivewellnessinstitute.org.



Research Recap

PROJECT NAME: Educating health professionals about Australian olive products (OL19001)

PROJECT AIM: To increase the use of olive products in the daily lives of consumers by equipping Australian health care and food industry professionals with the knowledge they need to advise about their health benefits and uses

PROJECT PARTNER: Boundary Bend Limited

FUNDING: Hort Innovation Olive Fund

PROJECT ENDS: March 2023

The strategic levy investment project Educating Health Professionals about Australian Olive Products OL19001 is part of the Hort Innovation Olive Fund. The project is partially funded by Hort Innovation, using the Olive Fund research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government.



Olive Wellness
INSTITUTE™



What do we have at the Olive Wellness Institute for Olive Growers and Processors?

The Olive Wellness Institute is excited to announce we will be working with Hort Innovation for an extended period!

The new funding will extend for a period of 3 years, **until March 2023**. It offers a great opportunity to expand on education relating to olive products to Australian healthcare professionals and other new audiences.

What resources have we specifically developed to assist growers and processors?

01.

EVENT KIT

This kit contains downloadable resources for use at events and/or farmers markets. It contains A3 posters and an FAQ guide for staff, and leaflets you can share with customers.

02.

INFOGRAPHIC: GUIDANCE ON CHOOSING A HIGH QUALITY EVOO

This simple flyer shows how people can best identify a high quality Australian EVOO to help promote your farm fresh product.

03.

OIL COMPARISON TOOL

Launched in June 2020, this online tool helps you compare up to 4 common cooking oils and review the current science.

Visit this page to access all resources
olivewellnessinstitute.org/olive-growers-and-processors-resources/



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The Olive Wellness Institute™ is a social responsibility venture, sponsored by Boundary Bend Limited and informed by an independent scientific Advisory Panel, with a mission to promote the dissemination of credible science related to Extra Virgin Olive Oil and other products derived from the olive tree.

This project is also partially funded by Hort Innovation, using the Olive Fund research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government. Hort Innovation is the grower owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture.

The strategic levy investment project Educating Health Professionals about Australian Olive Products OL19001 is part of the Hort Innovation Olive Fund.

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Subscribe to the OWI monthly newsletter to make sure you don't miss out on new resources and special events.

Final report: OL17003 - Australian olive industry sensory training program

Dr Soumi Paul Mukhopadhyay, NSW DPI

Project OL17003: *Australian olive industry sensory training* was designed to provide the Australian olive industry (AOI) with the necessary skills to enable ongoing monitoring of the sensory attributes of extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) and table olives (TO), aligned with industry specifications for quality.

The overall objectives of the project were to assist the AOI in providing a series of integrated, staged (beginner-intermediate-expert) training programs. The training programs were designed to meet two main objectives:

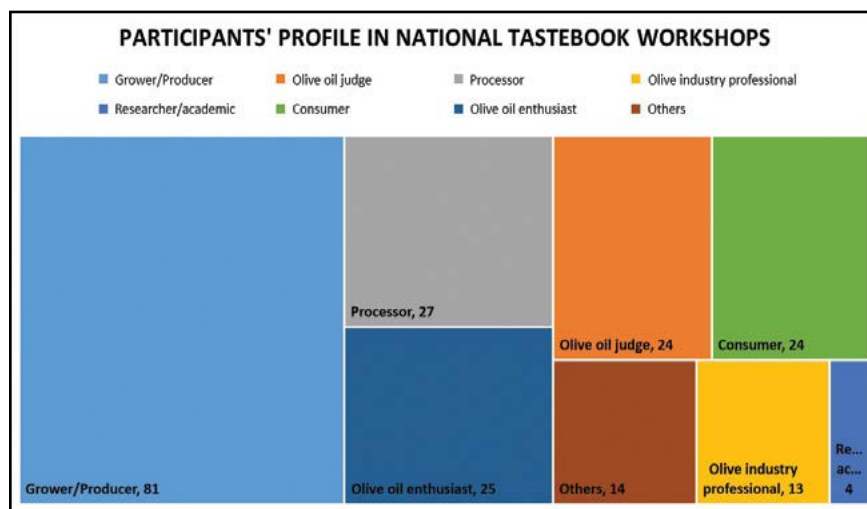
- maintain the sensory expertise of accredited sensory panelists and nationally accredited competition judges; and
- encourage new entrants into the sensory training discipline of the AOI, and educate them on how to evaluate the sensory quality, flavour and presentation of EVOO and table olives for consistent quality.

This project aimed to ensure that the AOI has a critical mass of trained panelists and competition judges capable of assisting the industry in matching their oil and fruit production to the evolving and increasing demands of the global olive market.

This assists the industry in delivering on Outcomes 1 (improved product quality) and 3 (greater skills, capacity and knowledge in the industry) of the Olive Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) through engagement with other R&D projects, specifically: OL17006 - *Extending OliveCare to foster excellence in production of Australian olives*.

Participation

The target audience for this project were EVOO and TO producers, levy payers and other Australian Olive Association (AOA) members, marketers, sensory panelists, EVOO and TO judges (beginners to experts) and olive product enthusiasts.



Key activities

A number of activities were undertaken within the project to ensure the deliverables were met with the target audience:

- establishment of a reference group for industry consultation and raising of awareness of sensory evaluation
- extension of the *TasteBook*® initiative to maintain sensory knowledge of existing olive oil panel members and competition judges
- sensory panel training for new industry entrants
- improved knowledge of table olive sensory descriptors for training and consumer communication
- review of past Australian Olive Oil Sensory Panel (Wagga Wagga) classification
- masterclasses and workshops on EVOO and TO judging and training to increase understanding and awareness of EVOO and TO use among general consumers
- communication and dissemination and learning and outcomes
- project legacy/sensory training program business model evaluation.

Project monitoring

Success was measured through registration, attendance, engagement and interaction of participants at all face-to-face national *TasteBook*® workshops in various states. Participants were provided with pre and post-workshop questionnaires, to provide an understanding of individual expectations in learning and to monitor the performance of the workshop in meeting those criteria. Significant numbers of olive industry stakeholders participated in various modes of training, via both face-to-face activities and online webinars.

At appropriate times, stakeholders were surveyed to gain insight into the value of the information provided and the various methods of delivery.

Key outcomes

The project achieved key measurable outcomes including:

- increased industry stakeholder participation and engagement in face-to-face *TasteBook*® sessions
- providing a formal mechanism for delivering a national framework of sensory training
- assisting participants to gain improved knowledge, awareness and the required sensory assessment skills to confidently undertake organoleptic



Heads-up: future R&D project activities

We're currently doing it at distance using video technology but there's still plenty going on in terms of olive industry levy R&D activities.

Here's a run-down of what's already on the schedule for coming months, so you can keep your eyes out for notices and get involved:

IPDM project grower survey

The final element of the two-year project, the survey will be run in late September 2020.

Olive Industry Strategic Review

This important review of industry opportunities and challenges, goals and objectives, will take place in late 2020.

Healthy Soils Field Days

The national program of interactive field days has been re-scheduled for late February to early April 2021, when it is hoped COVID restrictions will be more relaxed.

Boort Processing Workshop

Due to its reliance on harvest timing for the practical element, this comprehensive workshop with experts Pablo Canamasas and Peter and Marlies Eicher is planned to be run again in April 2021, again subject to COVID restrictions.

We'll update as details are confirmed here in the quarterly R&D Insights, and via the Grove Innovation and Friday Olive Extracts e-newsletters. Industry events are also posted on the *OliveBiz* website - www.olivebiz.com.au.

IPDM project outputs now available

Pest and disease experts Dr Robert Spooner-Hart and Len Tesoriero have travelled the country over the past two years as part of the olive R&D project *An integrated pest and disease management extension program for the olive industry* (OL17001).

The objective of the project is to provide Australian olive growers with access to current, practical information and instruction for implementing integrated pest and disease management (IPDM) strategies in their groves. And with the project nearing its end, a broad range of information, outputs and associated links is now available on the *OliveBiz* website, to download, read and/or watch, including:

- on-line tutorials on IPDM theory and practice, and key olive pests and diseases;
- flyers on key olive pests and diseases, including exotic biosecurity risks;



- Revised Field Guide to Olive Pests, Disorders and Diseases in Australia;
- Olive IPDM Manual.

The information, and how to access it, was presented in a webinar with Spooner-Hart and Tesoriero on

1 September - *IPDM Project Resources & How to Access Them*. A recording of the webinar is now available for viewing on the *OliveBiz* website - www.olivebiz.com.au - under the Projects dropdown, where you'll also find the full range of IPDM resources.