

The following was taken from the Nov/Dec 08 issue of "Australian & New Zealand Olivegrower" magazine

### **Imported oils fail test standards**

Six out of nine imported extra virgin olive oils on Australian supermarket shelves tested recently using international standards were found not to be of extra virgin quality.

The test was part of the quality survey of 12 extra virgin olive oils, nine imported and three Australian major supermarket brands, commissioned by the Australian Olive Association (AOA).

The tests were carried out by the Australian Oils Research Institute of the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and were based on internationally recognised standards.

The three Australian olive oils passed all the tests indicating that they were authentic extra virgin olive oils. However, test results also showed that six of the nine imported oils failed the international standards, which indicated that the oils labelled as extra virgin were not extra virgin.

Three of the contained refined olive oil, or refined oils of some sort, and one of them contained canola oil.

The association defined extra virgin olive oil as the natural oil from quality olives that have been picked straight off the tree and extracted as soon as possible without the use of chemicals or excessive heat. This ensures that the oil's remarkable health benefits, flavour and freshness are maximised.

The AOA said it is committed to developing an olive industry where customers' interest are placed first with regard to freshness, taste and quality.

AOA president Paul Miller said the presence of adulterated oil was not just a problem in Australia but was also one in Canada, the USA and in Europe.

"But unfortunately Australia doesn't do any regular testing of olive oils. We'd like that to happen," Mr Miller said.

Miller blamed the global agrifood industry which he said was substituting lower-grade stuff to meet the growing demand for what he described as a precious product and “something people rely on as the healthy fat”.

Principal research scientist with the Australian Oils Research Institute based in Wagga Wagga, Rod Mailer, said the adulterated oil exposed by the test would not be tolerated if Australia was trying to export to Italy.

“But, at the same time we are taking oil from Italy or Spain which doesn't even meet their own countries requirements,” he said.

To combat adulterated olive oil the AOA has developed an industry Code of Practice and a logo that promotes quality, authenticity and confidence in the Australian olive industry.

The Code of Practice is based on the Codex Alimentarius Standard, IOC Standards (European standards) and the recently developed German standards. It aims to provide security and confidence to consumers and investors in Australia and overseas that certified Australian olive products meet the highest industry standards. To be certified by the Code of Practice, products must be Australian and undergo organoleptic (taste) and chemical testing.

End of article

***So to guarantee that you are getting the genuine article, buy Rich Glen Olive Oil from Exflo, the local produce, and take advantage of the wholesale pricing Exflo can offer.***

***Made in Yarrawonga***