

New grade and labelling standards for olive oils

The newly formed Olive Oil Commission of California (OOCC) already presented its recommendations on new grade and labelling standards for olive oils to the California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA).

The OOCC proposals

The key points of the OOCC recommendations, comparing to the current EU, IOC standards are:

A) Product name (labelling)

The only product names permitted for human consumption are:

- a) Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- b) Virgin Olive Oil
- c) Refined Olive Oil Blend composed of refined-olive oil and virgin (or extra virgin) olive oils
- d) Refined Olive Oil

Important change 1st : The Refined-Olive-Oil blend shall not be labelled as "olive oil", as it was known till now in all global standards

Important change 2nd : Terms such as "Pure" and "Light" are prohibited from appearing on labels, because they mislead the consumers

Important change 3rd : the term "lampante" is removed and replaced by the term "Crude olive oil" witch is not fit for human consumption without treatment.

B) Chemical measures and analysis

More restrictive limits are set for chemical measures such as:

- a) The free acidity
- b) Peroxide Value (PV)
- c) Absorbency in ultraviolet K232 and K270

The proposal adds further analysis of

- a) Pyrotheophytin a (PPPs)
- b) 1,2 Diacylglycerols (DAGs)

C) More restrictive limits are set for sensory panel analysis

For the OOCC's recommendations see the table above

Parameter	OLIVE OIL			REFINED-OLIVE OIL		OLIVE-POMACE-OIL		
	Extra Virgin olive oil	Virgin olive oil	*Crude olive oil	Refined olive oil blend	Refined olive oil	Olive pomace oil blend	Refined olive pomace oil	Crude olive pomace oil
Free Fatty Acid Content (%m/m)	≤0.5	≤1.0	>1.0	≤0.8	≤0.3	≤1.0	≤0.3	N/A
Peroxide Value (PV) (meq O ₂ /kg oil)	≤15.0	≤20.0	>20.0	≤15.0	≤5.0	≤15.0	≤5.0	N/A
Absorbency in ultraviolet K232	≤2.40	≤2.60	>2.60	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Absorbency in ultraviolet K270	≤0.22	≤0.24	>0.24	≤0.90	≤1.10	≤1.70	≤2.00	N/A
Absorbency in ultraviolet Delta K	≤0.01	≤0.01	>0.01	≤0.15	≤0.16	≤0.18	≤0.20	N/A
Moisture and volatile matter (MOI)(%m/m)	≤0.2	≤0.2	≤0.3	≤0.1	≤0.1	≤0.1	≤0.1	≤1.5
Insoluble impurities (INI) (%m/m)	≤0.1	≤0.1	≤0.2	≤0.1	≤0.1	≤0.1	≤0.1	N/A
Pyropheophytin a (PPPs) (%)	≤15	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1,2 Diacylglycerols (DAGs) (%)	≥40	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Organoleptic Analysis Median of Defects(MeD)	=0.0	0.0<MeD≤2.5	>2.5	≤2.5	≤2.5	≤2.5	≤2.5	N/A
Organoleptic Analysis Median of Fruity(MeF)	>0.0	>0.0	N/A	>0.0	N/A	>0.0	N/A	N/A

Note: for crude olive oil one criteria is sufficient.

What's next?

The OOC proposals will be under consideration by the California Department of Food & Agriculture, in a public hearing. Scheduled for Tuesday, July 15, in Sacramento, so the CDFA can receive comments from all interested parties, regarding the proposed standards.

Although the OOC proposals are applicable to olive oils produced in California, one could assume, without the risk to be disproved that the final decisions of the CDFA intend to apply the new standards nationally in the USA.

The (new) American legal framework will affect current trade agreements and practices (B2B) between American importers and exporters from Europe and other countries.

An intervention by the European Union and the International Olive Oil Council should be considered possible.

Source: <http://olivenews.gr/en/article/4636/new-grade-and-labeling-standards-for-olive-oils>
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