

California Olive Ranch Negotiating to Buy Importer Lucini

California Olive Ranch, the largest American olive oil producer, announced it is in negotiations to acquire Lucini Italia, a producer and importer of Italian extra virgin olive oils, according to a company spokesperson.

Gregg Kelley, CEO of California Olive Ranch said in a statement released today, "Lucini shares our standards of quality and authenticity and like California Olive Ranch it is one of the fastest growing brands on the US market. We greatly admire their practices and their oils."

California Olive Ranch is owned by a group of Spanish investors, including members of the Sumarroca family, Catalan agriculture industrialists whose portfolio also includes production operations in Australia and Chile.

If negotiations are successful, each entity will continue to operate under its own label with all Lucini oils grown and milled in Italy and all California Olive Ranch oils still grown and milled in California, according to the statement.



Possible changes to Lucini products, the company said, might include the "implementation of California Olive Ranch best practices such as a seal of certification and harvest dates on the label and bottling in colored glass."

California Olive Ranch recently [came under criticism](#) for displaying only the second year of the harvest season on its bottle labels — a practice sanctioned by [new standards adopted](#) by California producers.

At an [industry conference last April](#), Kelley described what he saw as "green shoots of fundamental change" in the sector, evidenced by the substantial growth by brands that are producing quality products and are transparent about quality. Kelley cited

his company's 50 percent annual growth, and Lucini's 18 percent growth, as evidence of an evolving marketplace.

Lucini Italia products have won numerous awards at the New York International Olive Oil Competition, [including two Gold Awards](#) this year. Lucini olive oils are available nationally at grocery and specialty food stores.

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