



DATE: June 3, 2020

TO:

***RE: CALL FOR OIL OLIVE RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSALS – CANOPY MANAGEMENT IN ESTABLISHED SUPER-HIGH DENSITY (SHD) OLIVE GROVES***

**INTRODUCTION TO THE OLIVE OIL COMMISSION OF CALIFORNIA (OCC)**

The Olive Oil Commission of California (OCC) is soliciting proposals for research found to be of highest priority by the industry. The Commission – a marketing order operating under sanction of the State of California – was established by California oil olive growers to develop and enforce grades and labeling standards for the purity and quality of olive oil produced in the state of California as well as to fund research related olive and olive oil production. California olive oil handlers who produce or cause to be produced 5,000 gallons or more of olive oil are required by law to participate in the OCC’s annual mandatory government sampling and testing program.

**INDUSTRY SUPPORT FOR INVESTIGATORS**

Operating as a committee to the Board of Directors (BOD), the OCC Research Committee is composed of appointed industry leaders purposed with orchestrating research program activities as well as developing annual research funding recommendations for presentation to the BOD for formal approval. The Research Committee has created a “Canopy Management” working group which is tasked with providing industry support from the development of a proposal through to the successful completion of any project related to canopy management. For inquiry of any industry-specific information when developing a pre-proposal and/or full proposal in alignment with the project scope discussed below, please contact Tyler Rood ([tyler@aamsi.com](mailto:tyler@aamsi.com)).

**RESEARCH PRIORITIES RELATED “ORCHARD MANAGEMENT”**

**Canopy Management**

Many of the super-high-density (SHD) olive orchards in California were planted between the years of 2007 and 2012, and thus have recently entered a mature stage. For approximately six years, the industry has widely adopted mechanical pruning, referred to as “hedging”, as standard industry practice in place of more traditional and expensive manual hand pruning. Since 2010, no research trials have been conducted in California to quantify and measure the impact of various pruning strategies on mature SHD olive groves. With this in mind, the OCC Research Committee has identified canopy management as a high research priority related to orchard management and would like to formally commission a study to compare the latest canopy management strategies adopted in SHD systems – mechanical, manual, vs. mixed pruning strategies – and their effect on the parameters discussed below.

## **CANOPY MANAGEMENT PROJECT SCOPE**

The project scope detailed below outlines what industry asks investigators to include within any canopy management study. Any canopy management study should not be limited to the project scope detailed below: investigators may recommend the expansion and/or reduction of the project scope should they believe that their recommendations would strengthen the project and remain feasible in both budget and project duration.

- $\geq$  four-year project evaluating various canopy management or pruning strategies within a  $\geq$  10 y/o arbequina olive grove
- Pruning strategies of interest for evaluation or inclusion as a treatment group include:
  - Severe vertical hedging of every third row every year, with the remaining two rows untouched
  - Severe Gable or Christmas tree hedging of every third tree row, with the remaining two rows untouched
  - Severe Gable Hedging every third row with the remaining two rows mechanically tipped at 40" from trellis wire at a slight angle
  - Every row mechanically tipped every year at slight angle 40" from the trellis wire.
  - Manual hand pruning of every row each year
  - Manual hand pruning of every row complemented with mechanical tipping during "on" years to maintain optimal canopy size and balance crop load.
  - All treatments to be topped and skirted mechanically at the same time (topping in mid-summer and skirting shortly afterwards)
- Parameters to be measured for each test plot:
  - Cost per tree and cost per/acre for each pruning strategy
  - Average weight of material removed per tree with the separation of and comparisons between large wood and small twigs/leaves
  - Canopy volume after pruning and at harvest time
  - Fruit size
  - Oil content and moisture content of fruit
  - Amount of MOO in fruit
  - Fruit yield per tree
  - Oil yield per tree
  - Oil quality and character
  - Harvester removal efficiency
  - Farmgate cost per gallon of OO produced

## **PRE-PROPOSAL GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND REVIEWAL PROCESS**

By no later than Friday, June 19th, please send any pre-proposal grant application to Tyler Rood, Olive Oil Commission of California, 1521 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, or by email to [tyler@agamsi.com](mailto:tyler@agamsi.com). Please utilize the attached "**RESEARCH GRANT PRE-PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**" when developing your pre-proposal. As discussed above, you are encouraged to interact with industry members when developing your pre-proposal.

OCCC Research Committee members will meet on Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, to review pre-proposals and formalize a July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 fiscal year committee budget for recommendation to the BOD for approval – the pre-proposal process will allow the OCCC Research Committee

to strategically allocate funds within said committee budget. Principal investigator(s) may be asked to provide a brief presentation on and/or field questions concerning their pre-proposal during the remote meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Should funds be allocated within the Research Committee budget towards your project, you will be asked to work alongside “Canopy Management” working group members to further refine your project and develop a full proposal for evaluation at the committee level.

Because the OCCC is a marketing or commodity board and receives funds exclusively through grower assessments, the OCCC is not subject to administrative overhead or “indirect costs” – do not allocate any requested funds toward administrative overhead or “indirect costs” within your project budget.

### **EXPECTED PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

#### Written Report(s)

Regarding multi-year projects: grant applications must be submitted for each year of the project. An annual report or progress report must be submitted prior to each additional grant application. The annual report or progress report will be completed in written format and by way of a presentation during the annual California Olive Oil Day (COOD) event.

Final reports summarizing the findings of a single-year project or a multi-year project will be completed in written format and by way of a presentation during the annual COOD event.

Principal investigator(s) and/or project collaborators will be asked to host annual field days with industry members at the trial site(s).

#### California Olive Oil Day (COOD)

The OCCC hosts an annual California Olive Oil Day (COOD) event where research is disseminated to industry by creating an interface between investigators and the olive oil industry. COOD will take place on March 5, 2021. The principal investigator(s) and/or project collaborator(s) would be expected to provide a brief presentation on the annual findings or project conclusions at this event or equivalent.