



DATE: June 3, 2020

TO:

RE: CALL FOR OIL OLIVE RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSALS – OLIVE OIL STANDARDS

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 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 to 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. The mandatory sampling and testing program acts as a form of audit whereby the labeling of olive oil is determined in accordance with the California grade and labeling standards. Those handlers who produce or cause to be produced less than 5,000 gallons of olive oil may participate in the program on a voluntary basis.

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 an "Olive Oil Standards" working group which is tasked with identifying research priorities related olive oil standards as well as providing industry support for the development of a proposal through to the successful completion of the project. 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). Inquiries will be forwarded to Mary Mori – Director of Technical Services, California Olive Ranch – who is serving as the leader of the "Olive Oil Standards" working group.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES RELATED "OLIVE OIL STANDARDS"

Off-the-Shelf Survey

The "Olive Oil Standards" working group identified an off-the-shelf survey as the key project of focus during the 2020-21 year.

The annual mandatory sampling and testing program may evaluate any product in handler possession or within bulk storage. This program helps to validate olive oil quality prior to bottling; however, the program is insufficient at evaluating the real-time quality of olive oil once it

leaves handler possession and begins its journey through the supply chain. The design of the study outlined in “Project Scope” below was crafted to do just that: evaluate and assess the quality of extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) – produced exclusively from olives grown in California – once the product leaves handler possession and enters storage conditions that are less controlled. The off-the-shelf testing allows for the California olive oil industry to observe the effects of storage on the olive oil quality in real time and examine what is being sold to consumers.

The primary objective of this study will be to analyze the on-shelf quality of olive oil produced by all OOC members as well as to collect all pertinent information on samples that will allow industry to evaluate use by date prediction models as well as promote favorable product storage conditions to all those involved throughout the supply chain. Secondly, the project will serve to compare the quality of olive oils observed at marketplace between OOC members and non-OOC members. This will provide a picture of the quality of 100% California EVOO at marketplace today.

PROJECT SCOPE

The project scope detailed below outlines what industry asks investigators to include within any off-the-shelf project but any off-the-shelf project should not be limited to the project scope detailed below: investigators may suggest additional procedures they feel would strengthen the project.

Testing Procedures:

- Once a sample is purchased, the sample shall be kept in cool (59 to 64 °F) and dark storage conditions and submitted to a laboratory for testing within a reasonable time frame (a maximum of 4 weeks of elapsed time between purchase of the sample and submission of said sample for testing)
- Current California standard quality parameters: FFA, PV, UV (k232, k270), PPP, DAG, and sensory evaluation.
- Induction time (110°F for proper correlation to the use by date prediction model)
- Repeat sensory analysis up to one time on any samples that failed the 1st round to validate sensory results as accurate.

Sampling Procedures:

- All samples pulled shall be labeled as EVOO and 100% California olive oil or produced exclusively from California olives.
- Samples should be focused on one-year-old olive oils: look for olive oils produced during the 2019 harvest season (Sept. 2019 - April 2020).
- Sample at least one lot from every brand produced and owned by OOC mandatory and voluntary members.
 - For brands with wider distribution, obtain multiple samples with varying bottle sizes and bottle materials.
- Samples shall include at least six brands that are non-OOC mandatory or voluntary members but labeled as 100% California olive oil.

- OCCC members will communicate brand information to the project leader(s) so that they may sample from all OCCC members
- 50 samples shall be taken.
- Sampling shall be conducted prior to May of 2021 to allow for ample evaluation timing.
- Samples shall be pulled from various retailers throughout the LA Region and Bay Area of California or in the event samples of OCCC members are not available in those regions due to brands not selling there or having small distribution, locating those brands online from a third-party retailer—not direct from the producer—is acceptable.
- Ensure diversity of retail stores that samples are pulled from by sampling from different categories: warehouse stores (Costco, Sams Club, etc.), large chain supermarkets (Safeway, Whole Foods, Fresh Market, Vons, Sprouts, Raley’s, etc.), local specialty or grocery stores, department stores (Target, Walmart, etc.), and online retailers if necessary.
- The following measurements should accompany each sample pulled from retail to allow industry to evaluate use by date prediction models as well as to correlate storage conditions – throughout the supply chain – with off-the-shelf quality:
 - Lot codes
 - Harvest date (if available)
 - Bottling date (if available)
 - “Best By” or “Best if Used By” date
 - Bottle size
 - Bottle type and color
 - Transport/storage information once sampled/purchased from store and stored for chemistry and sensory evaluation
 - Where samples were collected: retailer identification and location
 - Use light meter to measure illumination of top shelf, bottom shelf and shelf position where the sample was selected
 - Record temperature of top shelf and bottom shelf of where the oil was taken
 - Measure the amount of linear shelf space occupied by the olive oil of all grades, as well as the proportion of California olive oil of that total

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. 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 Wednesday, June 24th, 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. Should funds be allocated within the

Research Committee budget towards your project, you will be asked to work alongside working group members to further refine your project and develop a full proposal for evaluation at the committee level.

Because the OOCB is a marketing or commodity board and receives funds exclusively through grower assessments, the OOCB 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

A single entity will assume leadership or grantee status of the project; though, the leader or grantee may choose to outsource product sampling or chemical and sensory analysis. The project leader or grantee will assume all reporting responsibilities.

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.

Final Report

A final report is expected to discuss the following items:

1. Summary review of the quality parameters of 100% California EVOO sampled from retail shelves.
 - a. We understand by diversifying the sampling locations to ensure all OOCB members are sampled from, all measurements described above may not be available for all samples. In that case, the expectation for reporting would be to segment shelf evaluation and correlation to quality to the subset of samples at retailers vs. purchased by other means.
2. Summary comparison between the OOCB member and non-OOCB member off-the-shelf olive oil quality.
3. Above data evaluated using the Best By Prediction model outlined on the OOCB website [here](#) to understand the applicability of the best by printed on the bottle to the theoretical remaining shelf life the prediction model indicates it should have
4. A comparison between the quality data of samples collected and analyzed from marketplace vs. the quality data at the time of bottling/production used by the handler to label the sample of interest with a “Best By” or “Best if Used By” date
5. Report complete and presented to the OOCB Research Committee by June 2021
6. NO INFORMATION THAT COULD BE USED TO IDENTIFY A HANDLER IS TO BE DISCLOSED WITHIN A FINAL REPORT

7. The project leader(s) will create a report for each OOC member. Each report will summarize all information related the sample(s) associated the respective OOC member. All reports are to be submitted to the commission by no later than May of 2021.

California Olive Oil Day (COOD)

The OOC 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 findings of their respective project at this event or equivalent.