

OLIVES NEW ZEALAND OLIVEMARK

The international Olive Council has set standards for Olive Oil, including Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

The OliveMark guarantees 100% New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

To qualify for Olives New Zealand Certification and use of the OliveMark, New Zealand olive oil must meet specific requirements. These include meeting the chemical and sensory criteria that Olives New Zealand has based on the International Olive Council (IOC) standards for extra virgin olive oil, as well as meeting labelling and packaging standards.

1. Classification Requirements by the International Olive Council

Olive Oil must meet both chemical analysis **and** sensory assessment.

Chemical Analysis:

Free Fatty Acid level measured as oleic acid must be less than 0.8% (Olives NZ = 0.5%)

Peroxide Value less than 20mEq per kg (Olives NZ = 15).

Note that Olives NZ has set higher criteria for both of these for Certification, therefore our EVOO is of higher quality

Sensory Assessment:

Extra Virgin - the median of the defects is equal to zero (0) and the median of the fruity attribute is more than (0).

Virgin grade - the median of the defects is more than (0) and less than or equal to 3.5 and the median of the fruity attribute is more than (0).

Ordinary Virgin - the median of the defects is more than 3.5 and less than or equal to 6.0 or when the median of the defects is less than or equal to 3.5 and the median of the fruity attribute is equal to (0).

Lampante Virgin grade - the median of the defects is more than 6.0.

Note Lampante is literally 'lamp oil' and is unfit for human consumption unless it is refined.

2. Labelling and Packaging

Labelling

The label on the oil must meet the required NZFSA standards, and have the month of pressing and best before date on it.

Packaging

The oil must be in dark glass bottles or if clear bottles or light glass bottles are used they must be packaged in a container that will exclude light, or in plastic bags in boxes, or in cans.

COST OF NEW ZEALAND EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

New Zealand EVOO is amongst the best in the world as evidenced by success in international competitions and critiques by international judges.

Factors that impact on the cost of New Zealand EVOO:

- NZ enterprises are small and unfortunately lack economies of scale
- Labour costs are high
- Oil yield % is relatively low compared to Europe and groves in Australia
- Harvesting and Processing costs are high because of the cost of equipment
- Cost to control disease and vegetative growth
- Compliance costs (eg Food Safety)
- Certification costs (to ensure that it is EVOO)
- Packaging costs

The sum of all these factors is high input costs and therefore the price at the retail counter. However, they also all add up to top quality Certified EVOO that compares with the best internationally.

Production costs across the board are completely different in Europe, due to many factors – wages, scale, base equipment costs, subsidies and even the black market economy.

There are subsidies in Europe and Australia, therefore this affects their selling price as the subsidies offset costs incurred. Subsidies are unlikely to go because European countries (eg Spain, Greece) will have an even bigger welfare and unemployment problem if they drop subsidies to the olive industry.