

## **AGM Address – Fernando Román Martinez**

Fernando started by thanking Olives New Zealand for the invitation to judge in New Zealand and to Andrew and Gayle for the organisation of his visit and his program. Fernando said that he is a Doctor of Molecular Science with a Masters in Fats and Oils. He is a Scientist at the Instituto de la Grasa located in Seville, a Government institute, and is involved in studying olive oil and other fats.. He is also a member of the IOC sensory panel in Spain and has judged internationally. Fernando said this was his first time in New Zealand and it was the first time he had been on a judging panel that required all judges to be formally trained. He said from a judge's perspective it was great that all oils entered had been certified as this meant the judges could focus on tasting for positive attributes rather than having to taste for defects. Fernando said the tasting laboratory at Massey University was an excellent facility with the individual booths and oil being presented 'blind' ensuring identification was not possible and integrity maintained. He had high praise for the Facilitator (Kay McMath) and the professionalism of the running of the Awards.

After the Awards judging had been completed, Fernando described his tour of olive groves and pressing facilities from Northland to Wairarapa with Andrew. He said he had met many people all very proud of their olive groves and olive oils. He had tasted many oils and was pleased to say that they were all EVOO unlike Spain where the majority of oil is not. Fernando said it was apparent that NZ growers focussed on producing very high quality and he could offer some comments on further improvements.

### **1. Harvest Time**

Moisture appears to be an issue in New Zealand and olives full of water affects the phenols and impacts on shelf life. While we can't control the weather we can control when to harvest. As colour is not an indicator, then analysis is required on when oils are ready for harvest. He understood there was an issue with the availability of NIR in New Zealand but Olives NZ would be looking at this.

### **2. Water**

Avoid water in processing because it washes away phenols. If your olives are not dirty do not wash them. If you must wash then you must dry the olives before they go on to the crusher.

### **3. Malaxing**

Malaxing time is too short. Malaxing for more than 60 minutes would increase the yield and the quality.

### **4. Decanter Process**

Do not add water, there is sufficient present. After decanter and centrifuge, there should be two stages of decantation, using small vats with cone shaped bases to draw off water and solids before pumping into storage tanks. Otherwise sediment in the tanks will adversely affect the oil.

In summary Fernando said the phenol content is directly related to the attributes of olive oil. He said the NZ oils he had tasted were very good but needed more intensity. The answer to this was harvest time, reducing water in processing and reducing sediment.

Fernando encouraged growers to get NZ consumers tasting EVOO because it tastes very good and is healthy.

*Olives New Zealand would like to record its appreciation to GEA Westfalia for orchestrating Fernando's visit and for their sponsorship, without which it would not have been possible to bring Fernando to New Zealand.*