



## WA Olives News

### WA Olive Competition

Even in a “down year” we have seen some outstanding quality EVOO’s presented in the WA Olive Competition. We saw several “premium” quality oil awards presented to Tarralea Grove and Chapman River Olives. Other trophies were awarded to Cobram Estate and the best flavoured oil was won by Guinea Grove. The 2020 WA Olive Competition Result booklet is available on the web page.

It has been gratifying to note that we have had an increase in interstate entries. We have seen a terrible year for the non-WA growers with their ongoing drought affecting their capacity to keep up their groves. It looks as though they are coming out of that weather pattern and wish them well in the next season.

### Increased call for EVOO Contracts

In the past 3 months I have been approached by 6 buyers (National and international) of EVOO. I have forwarded their requests for large contracts to be filled, some repeated orders monthly. Those of our membership who have shown interest are now completely sold out of their non-contracted EVOO. I know this year has been a down year but a trend is showing us that our industry can increase its production.

This has highlighted an issue which could become a useful aspect of Olives WA to provide a support to its members.

### Marketing options

It seems that this year has offered us many opportunities to market our products to a wider set of markets. This has been due to issues in the eastern states caused by drought, limited workforce opportunities brought about by COVID 19 and a general market upward pressure that offers our olive product prices a rise. The cheaper overseas products have not been so readily available to markets which has shown the possibilities for local and national olive products. As always, the challenge is for WA growers to gain access to these markets on terms that suit our costs and price range.

It strikes me that we were unprepared before COVID 19 and are going to remain so until we get a shared forum that offers a collaboration amongst members and also the other aspects of the olive industry. I propose WAOC will offer members a point of contact for buyers, international, national and local that will direct them to particular members who have surplus quantities of good quality products surplus to current contracts. Often these buyers are our own members who have been enterprising and sold their own stock and need replenishing. We tried this process this year and I haven’t heard anything negative back to date. If you have quantities of quality EVOO or table olives surplus to current contracts, please let me know and I can continue this for the coming months. A better process may be applied for 2021 harvest and I am open to any ideas that may serve you better.

## Government Supports available

### Airfreight subsidies:

Airfreight costs subsidy up to 45% of COVID caused price rises

Here is an interesting export grant. It seems that it would be able to boost our exports by reducing the cost of freight. It expires in February so only  $\frac{3}{4}$  of stone fruit season and before fresh apple season but still worth having a look and coordinating with industry and exporters.

We are not sure how much the olive industry would need for airfreight due to perishability or time sensitivity, but just in case some do, the following might be of interest. This is an ongoing grant that has been extended to Feb 2021. The grant is for up to 45% of the increased cost of freight, assumed due to COVID19 impact (ie average cost of freight/kg last year to this year). The grant is applied for by your freight forwarder or airfreight supplier, so you will need to discuss this with them. If you are interested, enter:

<https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=a93c4de9-061c-b45a-2523-eee88a300b92>

### Agrifood and Beverage Voucher Program:

You should pass this onto your members, there may be some opportunities here for the olive industry for those wanting to expand or add an extra bow to their business.

See the link for details of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Agrifood and beverage voucher program.

This is designed for those currently value-adding and wanting to expand, or those looking to transition into manufacturing to value-add.

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/AFBvoucherprogram>

If you are interested in more information, contact Alec McCarthy:

[alec.mccarthy@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:alec.mccarthy@dpird.wa.gov.au)

### WAOC Board 2021

We have been increasingly involved in some very exciting developments over the past few years with pest management, innovative grove management, close links with tertiary institutions doing state based research and a huge demand for bulk EVOO. Our Board members have all been in place now for two years and we need to run elections for these Director positions early in 2021.

Those Directors that have been on for the greatest duration will stand down at the next AGM while the newer members will continue so that we can do "senate type" elections. Those stepping down and possibly for re-election will be Steve Milton, Isabelle Okis, Tanuja Sanders and Russell Lewis. Rick De San Miguel will also step down as he was seconded to the Board for an R&D role for 2020.

We will open up registration for those interested to send in their expressions of interest with a brief bio. The AGM will be in early March 2021. Immediately following the election, the new board will elect its Chairperson/President for the next 12 months. If you wish to nominate, please do so by 1 Jan 2021 to [admin@oliveswa.com.au](mailto:admin@oliveswa.com.au).

## Field Day March 2021

AOA and WAOC will present one or two field days in March 2021, one north of Perth and the other at Preston Grove in the South West. The focus will be on soil health, management practice and provide an opportunity to engage with contractors working in the olive industry. This joint venture is the first for WA and we hope will provide the industry and hobby groves with useful and practical connections for developing a wider range of olive products.

A specific aspect that interests many growers is the bi annual fruiting limitations to production of EVOO. It seems that most of the olive industry across Australia had a “down” year in 2020. In conversation with some avocado growers, who have a similar issue in their industry, they seem to think that this is caused by major climatic events that are common in many regions, extreme weather – frosts, heavy wind impacts on flowering, protracted drought, etc. They are also of the opinion that this can possibly be managed by increased care and maintenance of their trees in the next season/s. Unfortunately we seem to be getting a few of these events and look likely to see more in the future.

## Data Collection Olive Industry WA

WAOC is looking to gather data from all growers across the state in partnership with DPIRD. The data that we aim to collect is the actual number of olive groves operating and in place but not operating. Obviously size of each grove will determine whether it is an enterprise or operates as a hobby/small business and we are going to define what constitutes a grove.

This research will inform us on bio security contacts in the event of a disease or pest outbreak. It will also give us a scope of the potential for olive businesses to build into a viable and supportable industry so some general market knowledge will be asked for.

These two issues are of paramount importance if a serious partnership is to be built with government agencies and markets for WAOC to practically represent the needs of growers and industry in WA. All data will be held in the strictest confidence.

In conclusion:

- Drop me a line if you see issues or have a comment you wish to discuss.
- Let's build a board that drives an industry. Nominate for the Board or point me towards them.
- AOA will advertise the upcoming Field Days. I am looking to find contacts to invite to these days who are involved in the industry but not growers. If you have good contacts, please let me know.
- Let's chat about marketing. EVOO prices are rising locally. What is happening near you?
- Welcome David Burt and Dennis Angelatos – Life members WAOC – Contribution to raising awareness of quality EVOO in southwest groves in WA.
- Congratulations to the great EVOO award winners. Gdonya!

Steve Milton

President/Chair

WAOC

19 Nov 2020