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**California Olive Oil Council Announces Competition Winners Amidst Record-Breaking Production Year**

*In a field of great oils, there are some notable standouts*

**Berkeley, Calif., April 4, 2016**– The California Olive Oil Council (COOC) has announced the award winners for this year’s harvest. In a field of 166 submissions, 76 silver and 41 gold were among the award-winning extra virgin olive oils. This represents an increase of more than 40 percent over the previous year’s entries. Visit [cooc.com/competition-winners/](http://cooc.com/competition-winners/) for the full list of winners.

Standouts in the extra virgin category included the Best of Show in three different production levels:

- **Small production:** Dogtown Olive Oil ([www.dogtownorchards.com](http://www.dogtownorchards.com)) - Nestled in the Gold Country near historic Angels Camp, the Eudy family produces a classic Tuscan-style blend in a bucolic California setting.
- **Medium Production:** Olive Fantastic Ascolano variety ([www.olivefantastic.com](http://www.olivefantastic.com)) - Dewey Lucero produced the single varietal Ascolano that has a tropical, fruity olive oil flavor reminiscent of mango.
- **Large production:** Pacific Sun Proprietor’s Select ([www.pacificsunoliveoil.com](http://www.pacificsunoliveoil.com)) - Claiming this award for the second year in a row, this mono-varietal Ascolano extra virgin olive oil provides a lovely, balanced finish.

Also recognized along with each Best of Show producer is the miller who processed these outstanding oils: John Eudy, the miller for Dogtown, Lewis Johnson (Butte View Olive Mill) for Olive Fantastic and Pablo Voitzuk for Pacific Sun.

For the first time ever, the COOC held a Packaging and Design Competition in the following categories:

- **California Classic:** addresses the history and traditions of California agriculture through meaningful images and text
- **Creative Innovation:** communicates a strong message through a design that is both interpretive and original
- **Storytelling:** focuses on sharing experience through a design and narrative that is compelling and evocative

The winners in the single and series categories are:

- Single California Classic: La Panza Ranch
- Single Creative Innovation: Grove 45 [www.grove45.com](http://www.grove45.com)
- Single Storytelling: Ciarlo Fruit & Nut [www.ciarlofruitnut.com](http://www.ciarlofruitnut.com)
  
- Series California Classic: California Olive Ranch [www.californiaoliveranch.com](http://www.californiaoliveranch.com)
- Series Creative Innovation: Pasolivo [www.pasolivo.com](http://www.pasolivo.com)
- Series Storytelling: ENZO Olive Oil [www.enzoliveoil.com](http://www.enzoliveoil.com)

With a historic production of over 4 million gallons of California extra virgin olive oil for the 2015 harvest, the COOC and its outstanding producers mark an unprecedented year of growth for the state's burgeoning olive oil industry.

There are over 38,000 acres of olives planted in California for the production of extra virgin olive oil with over 400 growers/producers in the state. The COOC estimates that 3,500 new acres will be planted each year in California through 2020. Over 75 olive varieties are grown in the state for olive oil production resulting in blends unique to California.

"We're very pleased to announce these award-winning recipients," said Patricia Darragh, Executive Director of the COOC. "California farmers work very hard to achieve world class standards while adhering to stringent best practices.

### **About the COOC**

The COOC is a trade association with the mission of encouraging the consumption of certified California extra virgin olive oil through education, outreach and communications. The COOC is committed to upholding the highest standards within the olive oil industry through its Seal Certification Program. The COOC has over 400 members including growers and producers, service providers, retailers and other supporters of the California olive oil industry.

The COOC represents over 90% of all olive oil production in California.