

May 2020



## President's Message

Dear Fellow Members,

Trust all of you and your families are staying safe and busy.

As we know, all our interactions have moved online. Our board has met and will continue meeting in video conferences. Though we miss our physical presence, online meetings also save us from long drives, simplifying our busy schedules, which is certainly a welcome change. That said, rest assured: our work on behalf of the COOC continues to get done.

There has been plenty to keep us busy. Board members continue performing a variety of activities, such as supporting the COOC's Marketing Director in the implementation of outreach and promotion initiatives, collaborating in the specification of a National Standard of Identity for olive oil to be presented to the FDA and monitoring the development of legislation that will impact product labeling rules in California. There are new items as well: a team of our board members are collaborating with other organizations on the formulation of a National Research & Promotion Order for olive oil. We will update you as these initiatives develop.

We are all looking forward to seeing everyone when this crisis is over. In the meantime, please, stay safe.

***Carlos Machado***  
***COOC Board President***

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## The Executive Director

Dear California Olive Oil Council Members,

I hope you and your family are doing well and staying safe. As the Bay Area begins week nine of sheltering in place, the COOC staff continues to be grateful for our members and some of the simpler things in life, such as our pets, Zoom calls and grocery deliveries. We'll continue to do our work from home for the next 3 weeks and hope to return to the Berkeley office in June.

The remote Seal Certification Program was successfully launched the week of April 13<sup>th</sup>. Seventeen of the COOC Professional Panel members have conducted sensory testing from home on 57 oils over the past three weeks. The second wave of 45 oils went through the panel the first week of May. Thank you to Max and Wendy, who have made great efforts to plan the program, and prepare and ship the oil packages to our panel members, while maintaining the high integrity of the program.

The board of directors and I will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation to determine the fate of the 2019 Annual Member Meeting. We've pushed the potential date out to September however, it is difficult to know what the circumstances will be in the Fall, and whether it will be wise to gather in

large groups. We will continue to keep you posted and will issue credits to members for registration, in the event we cancel the meeting.

Be well,

Patricia

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## **Industry News**

### **New Article from Board Member- Rachelle Bross, PHD RN**



Hello COOC Members! My name is Rachelle Bross and I am very excited to be joining the Board of Directors for the California Olive Oil Council! California EVOO represents many of the things that I am passionate about - food, health, science, cooking and family. As a PhD-trained dietitian/nutritionist, I have spent my career trying to help people live healthier lives by conducting research and publishing scientific articles on how what we eat affects our health. I am also a grower/producer of award winning California extra virgin olive oil. So I actually grow a food that is healthful and that directly helps people to understand that eating well and eating healthy is the same thing.

The science on the health benefits of olive oil in particular and the Mediterranean diet, in general, is both substantial and growing. This year marks 40 years since Ancel Keys published the book "Seven

Countries: A multivariate analysis of death and coronary heart disease" which reports on his important work identifying the Mediterranean Diet and its heart healthy benefits. Like the COOC, Dr. Ancel Keys was a Berkeley, California native! He put saturated fat on the map as a major cause of heart disease and was the first scientist to promote the health value of a Mediterranean diet. His studies found that men living in Italy and Greece who ate a Mediterranean diet — rich in fruits, vegetables, pasta, and olive oil, with small portions of meat, fish, and dairy products — appeared to be protected against heart disease.

Over the last year, several really important studies were published that continue to support the important role that extra virgin olive oil has in promoting healthfulness. Last April, a study published in the journal, *Molecules* (<https://www.mdpi.com/1420-3049/24/8/1555>), showed that cooking vegetables with extra virgin olive oil boosts the absorption and release of nutrients, such as carotenoids and polyphenols that are present in vegetables we find in many Mediterranean dishes (sofrito: garlic, onion and tomato). The nutrients in the vegetables actually move to the olive oil, which increases the proportion of the nutrients that are absorbed from the vegetables (aka bio-availability). These nutrients help fight the damaging effects of free radicals and inflammation in your body, which helps protect you against the development of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. This is the perfect example of when something that tastes great is also good for you!

We also learned that a Mediterranean diet plus extra virgin olive oil might delay the need for first glucose (sugar)-lowering medication among participants with type 2 diabetes, according to a study published in the August issue of *Diabetes Care*. (<https://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/42/8/1390.full-text.pdf>). Researchers in Spain randomly assigned 3,230 participants with type 2 diabetes from the PREDIMED trial to one of 3 groups: a Mediterranean-style eating plan supplemented with extra-virgin oil (4 tablespoons per day), a Mediterranean-style eating plan supplemented with mixed nuts (1 oz per day), or to a low-fat eating plan. After approximately 3 years, the researchers found that those assigned to receive supplemental extra-virgin olive oil, were less likely to have started taking diabetes medications during the study period. This pattern also held true after 5.1 years of follow-up. So this means you can enjoy a little more than a tablespoon of EVOO per meal drizzled over your foods as your source of added fat.

Finally, just this month, we learned that even relatively low consumption of olive oil improves cardiovascular risk in US adults (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacc.2020.02.036>). Since the work of Ancel Keys, we have understood that Europeans who consume more olive oil have a lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), but is that also true for adults in the US who typically consume much less olive oil? Scientists from Harvard designed the current study as an analysis of data from the Nurses' Health Study II and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study to answer that question. Nearly 93,000 U.S. health professionals who were free of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and stroke reported their olive oil intake on food-frequency questionnaires every 4 years beginning in 1990.

During the 24 years' of follow-up, 10.5% of participants experienced major CVD events (stroke, myocardial infarction, CVD death). After taking into account other factors such as diet, smoking status, family history, and presence of diseases such as hypertension, results indicated those consuming more than half a tablespoon of olive oil daily (more than 7 grams per day) had 14% lower risk of CVD and 18% lower risk of CHD (coronary heart disease). Olive oil intake was not associated with lower risk of stroke. □ In fact, just using 5 grams of olive oil as a replacement for 5 grams of margarine, butter, mayonnaise, and dairy fat was associated with a reduced risk of CVD. The study also showed that

participants with a higher intake of olive oil tended to have a greater intake of nuts, fruits, and vegetables and had lower levels of inflammatory biomarkers.

An expert in the field commented on these results, "The findings of the present study also suggest that the replacement of more saturated fats, such as butter, margarine, mayonnaise, and dairy fat, with olive oil entails a lower CVD risk. This is a further argument for promoting the use of olive oil in place of less healthy fats in the U.S. population".

Now more than ever, we can appreciate how important science and research are to our lives. Stay tuned...I hope to bring more of this kind of content to the COOC membership!

Stay Home and Stay Safe,

Rachell Cross PhD RD  
bross.rachelle@gmail.com

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## **Additional Industry News**

**Olive Oil School of Spain**

**Better than Butter**

**Lung Function in Older Adults**

**Cooking Olive Oil at Lower Temperatures Retains more of the Healthy Polyphenols**

**Greater Olive Oil Intake May Reduce CV Risk, Study says**

**Food & Wine**

**AARP Olive Oil Benefits**

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## **OCCC Survey**

Dear Members,

Thank you to the COOC members who responded to the Olive Oil Commission of California survey that was circulated at California Olive Oil Day. For those who have not completed the survey, we're asking you to do so now. The survey takes only a few minutes to complete and will help the OCCC to understand what is important to you.

Thank you,

Patricia

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LFK29R3>

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## UC DAVIS

### DAN FLYNN: " Building California's crop of the future"

As we adapt to the threat of COVID-19, the Olive Center is focusing on the decade ahead. We are building California's crop of the future, and we will do it in partnership with the COOC.

The Olive Center has been preparing for this decade for months. We conducted industry workshops, established an executive advisory board and, through the board, developed a long-range strategic plan.

Through our strategic plan are going to hire a future leader for our executive office and a PhD devoted to plant science. We will also expand research capacity through PhD partnerships with the USDA and UC Cooperative Extension. We will improve stakeholder connectivity through *pro bono* guidance provided by **Summit Strategy Group**.

Our strategic plan also helped us understand that we are building California's crop of the future. Here are three reasons:

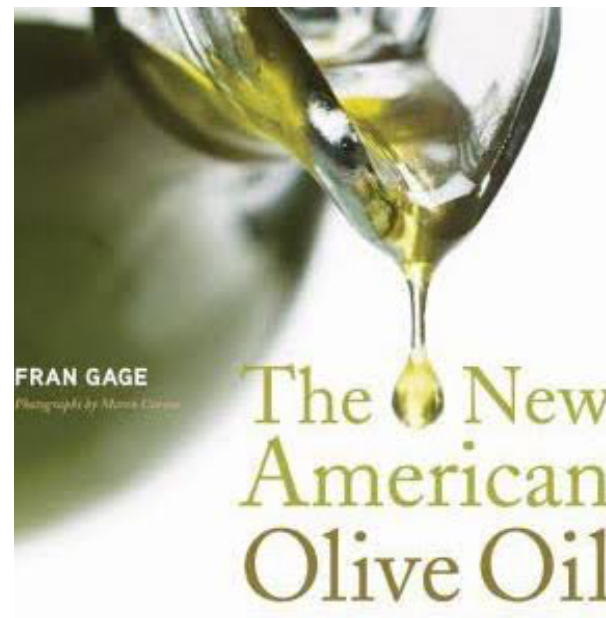
- **Farmers + Researchers = Success** This is the same formula that increased strawberry yields five-fold since the 1960s, allowed UC Davis walnut varieties to dominate the US market and drive California almonds to 80 percent global share. Continual renewal of the farmer and research relationship will be critical for California olives to aspire to the top tier of state crops in the next 20 years.
- **Less Water, More Opportunity** As California farmers consider a future with less irrigation water (due to an extended drought and state policy changes) olives should emerge as an attractive option. Olives can withstand a full year without irrigation (other crops die under such water stress), achieve excellent yields with less water and can tolerate high water-salinity better than other orchard crops.

- **Quality + Yield = Profit** The farmer's most fundamental need is profitability. California farmers partnered with the Olive Center to elevate quality over the past 10 years, coinciding with California olive oil farmers enjoying a significant premium over global commodity prices. In the next 10 years profitability must come more from better yields through strategies such as best practices, plant breeding and precision agriculture.

We know the immediate outlook is uncertain but we are not wavering from our path.  
Let's build California's crop of the future together.

Dan Flynn  
Executive Director  
UC Davis Olive Center

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### **Books for Inspiration**

#### **An introduction by author and COOC Taste Panel member Fran Gage**

The taste panel members not only love tasting extra-virgin olive oil, they also love to cook with it. During these times of restaurant closures and limited take-out, more of us are probably cooking at home. Here are some suggestions from the taste panel for cookbooks that champion our favorite oil.

Nancy Harmon Jenkins "Virgin Territory; Exploring the World of Olive Oil".

"The Essential Mediterranean" I especially like the recipe for Tunisian Orange-Olive Oil Tea cake, which I have made many times. It called for blood oranges, but regular oranges, or lemons work too.

All of Paula Wolfert's books, although "The Food of Morocco" is stunning.

Colman Andrews "Catalan Cuisine" This is an older book from the former editor of Saveur magazine. Almost every recipe calls for olive oil.

Yotam Ottolenghi's books use interesting ingredients, often bathed in olive oil. "Simple" is a good start to his work.

And I'll put in a plug for my book, "The New American Olive Oil."

Omnivore Books, a store dedicated to cookbooks, is a great resource if you need a book. Call them and they will ship to you.

And here are a few reminders for baking with extra-virgin olive oil:

If a recipe calls for another oil, such as canola, use extra-virgin olive oil instead. If a recipe calls for butter, substitute extra-virgin olive oil for the butter at three-quarters of the amount. For example, instead of eight ounces of butter, use six ounces of extra-virgin olive oil.

Fran Gage

***We asked several taste panel members to share some of their favorite cookbooks, olive oil related books and any other titles they have enjoyed or are currently reading during their time at home. Below are their suggestions.***

**Pablo:** Regarding olive oil, I'm reading papers from different researchers in Tuscany: Alessandro Parenti, Marzia Migliorini, Lorenzo Cecchi. These are people who have a very comprehensive education, being both scientists, excellent tasters and knowledgeable on olive oil making. They've produced quite a body of studies on phenols, milling, tasting, filtering, etc. They're available in English as well. I also finished a remarkable book by Emmanuele Carrère, called "*Lives Others Than My Own*".

**Kathryn:** I just started a novel called "*Station Eleven*" by Emily St. John Mandel. Admittedly, it might not be for everyone at this point in time. It's a post-apocalyptic novel about a flu pandemic (written in 2014, so very current) that wipes out most of civilization. It reminds me quite a bit of a book I read a few years ago - written by George R Stewart in 1949 called "*The Earth Abides*" which chronicles the survivors of a pandemic in Berkeley California! I think it's time to reread this timeless novel. My favorite olive oil book, for olive oil nerds and aspiring olive oil nerds is "*The Chemical Story of Olive Oil*". I think every one of our members should read this approachable but scientific look at our favorite product. It goes beyond the basics, and as a miller and producer, has been invaluable in my olive oil education.

**Nancy:** "*Wine Country Table*" by Janet Fletcher . It's such a beautiful book; published last year. "*Tender At The Bone*" by Ruth Reichl and also enjoyed last year's "*Save Me The Plums: My Gourmet Memoir*". "*The Passionate Olive*" by Carol Firenze and of course, Julia Child's "*My Life in France*".

**Astrid:** I have not been reading any books lately and I am far away from my home library. I did really like Fran's book *"The New American Olive Oil"*, with information on producers. I also found the book *"Extra Virginity"* by Tom Mueller fascinating. I often refer to *UC Davis/Paul Vossen's olive production manual and organic manual*. And then there is the *"World Catalogue of olive varieties"*.

**Giulio:** One of my favorites, not exclusively about EVOO, but EVOO and recipes are through out the book. They credit EVOO amongst a few other things for the longevity of life in folks' of a particular town. It is really about a mindset, one that I think goes hand and hand with the marketing of EVOO. *"A Year in the Village of Eternity - The Lifestyle of Longevity in Campodimiele, Italy"* by Tracey Lawson.

**Janell:** My personal favorites are: *"The Forest Feast Series"* by Erin Gleeson, *"A New Way to Eat"* by Anna Jones, *"My New Roots"* by Sarah Britton and *"The Clever Carrot"* by Emilie Raffa and her *Sourdough Made Easy* book.

**Arden:** *"Preserving Italy"* by Domenica Marchetti. The introduction lured me right in and since I do a fair amount of preserving it's always fun to get new ideas. Also *"Wolfdale's Cuisine Unique"* by Douglas Dale. The story he tells is about the restaurant's history and his "teacher" in Japan. It's a great read and the recipes are from dishes on the Wolfdale's menu throughout the years.



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## Marketing News

A big thank you to all members that participated in the COOC Shipping Directory we created to help consumers have one more channel to easily reach you during this time. We have shared the list on our social media channels, with select media and our generous partner CA Grown also shared it on their social media. We will continue to advertise this list on all of our channels and pursue other

outreach opportunities. If you have not added your name to the list, you can still do so. Click [HERE](#) to have your information added.



Members - Have you seen the [MEET THE MAKERS](#) and [INSPIRATION](#) sections of our new [microsite](#)? If not, click on any of the highlighted areas above.

Our goal is to continue to populate these areas of the microsite with producer and retailer stories as well as highlight inspiring and high quality recipe content with click-throughs back to producer and retailer websites. Help us celebrate you and the work you do!

For more detailed information on materials we need to be included please contact [wendy@cooc.com](mailto:wendy@cooc.com).

**Member IG Stories Series** - We want to begin highlighting members on our Instagram stories. **THIS IS OPEN TO EVERYONE.** To be included send 3 images that best promote your brand. Images should be compelling and inspirational. Please also include one sentence that you'd like us to communicate about your brand and provide names of anyone appearing in the imagery. IG stories are up for 24 hours and then archived on our IG page.

Did you have a chance to see the latest article generated from the WHY CA Campaign? Take a look at this excellent piece on Alta Cresta Olive Oil by clicking [here](#).

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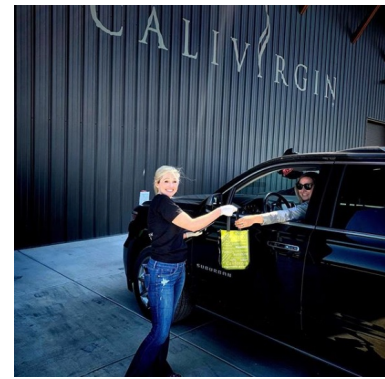


Photo credit in order: Quail and Olive, Oliver's Market, Calivirgin

## Covid-19 Survey

Thank you to the members who participated in the COOC Covid-19 survey. It was very important for us to get immediate insight into how this pandemic was affecting our membership. We wanted to share a snapshot of the results with you.

We learned that 50% of the 66 respondents have had a negative impact to their business since the pandemic began. 12% have been positively impacted, while 23% have experienced both a positive and negative effect on their business, depending on the sales channel.

85% receive online sales from their website. 79% are utilizing social media, and 48% of those not using social media would welcome support from the COOC.

The channels most negatively impacted by Covid-19 include 60% of specialty stores, followed by 38% of restaurants/food service and 38% of tasting rooms.

The majority of respondents would like COOC support in three areas:

1. Reaching more markets online/how to promote their products and getting tools to drive new customers to their website.
2. Social media- with an focus on understanding how to produce good content.
3. Web support with an emphasis on setting up e-commerce.

We received a diverse list of other areas of interest and will be reaching out to individual members to provide one on one support.

There was an enormous interest in webinars, featuring a wide variety of topics, from shipping internationally, virtual olive oil tastings, approaching new retail venues, direct marketing, maximizing online sales, orchard management, to name a few.

As a result, the COOC is exploring the possibility of creating a library of meaningful webinars that would help our members.

**Welcome New Members!**

La Villa Farms

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# FOSS

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**A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED  
TO THE WHY CALIFORNIA CAMPAIGN.  
We value your support.**

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The Devico Family - Sunrise Olive Ranch

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Steve & Carlo Sturken – Oliveto Ranch  
Carol Firenze -The Passionate Olive  
Roger & Kate Schafer – Pine Mountain Olive Farm  
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Linda Marshall – The Ranch at Birch Creek  
West Coasts Products  
Dewey Lucero – Wild Groves  
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Executive Director: Patricia King  
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Taste Panel Leader: Dean Wilkinson

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#### **ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA OLIVE OIL COUNCIL**

*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.*

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