



**CALIFORNIA  
OLIVE OIL COUNCIL**  
EST. 1992

# OLEA NEWS

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March/ April 2022

## COOC TASTE PANELIST SPOTLIGHT

The COOC Seal Certification Process is conducted with the help of the COOC Taste Panel. In order for an oil to carry the COOC Seal, it must pass a sensory evaluation by our panelists, who have completed extensive education and training courses. This season, we would like to highlight our taste panelists. Each newsletter, we will feature a different panelist that has continued to support the COOC and our mission to uphold the highest quality of California Extra Virgin Olive Oil.



### Janell Pekkain

Janell Pekkain is from San Francisco and graduated from UC Santa Barbara. After graduating college, Janell traveled the world and lived abroad in Japan. When she returned to the United States she moved back to San Francisco and started to learn about the olive oil industry and became passionate about olive oil evaluation. She jumped at the opportunity to take sensory evaluation courses, and shortly after, she joined the California Olive Oil Council Taste Panel. Janell has been on the panel now for eight years. Janell is also the owner and co-founder of Olive This Olive That, an olive oil shop in San Francisco established in 2012. In her shop, she sells oils from other COOC members that have been produced and milled in California. One of her goals with her shop is to educate consumers on extra virgin olive oil, and teach them how different varieties of olive oil can

transform and enhance food. The California Olive Oil Council is thrilled to have such passionate and knowledgeable individuals, like Janell, on the COOC Taste Panel!

## TOKYO INTERNATIONAL EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL COMPETITION - JOOTA AWARDS 2022

Registration for the JOOTA AWARDS 2022 close on May 10, 2022 and samples must be received by May 20, 2022. This event is a great opportunity for producers who have yet to enter the Japanese market to meet importers. Additionally, the JOOTA AWARDS offer chef and buyer awards that are helpful in accelerating the spread of your oils in Japan. Lastly, award-winning oils will be featured at other food related trade shows in Japan. If you are interested in registering, please visit the webpage:

<https://jootaaward.com/>

## CALIFORNIA DROUGHT UPDATE

Following the driest first three months of a year in the state's recorded history, Governor Newsom released an executive order on March 28, 2022 that calls on local water suppliers to activate drought contingency plans. This order also calls the Water Board to consider a ban on watering decorative grass around commercial, industrial and institutional buildings. To further conserve water and strengthen drought resiliency in this critically dry year, the Governor is encouraging suppliers, where appropriate, to consider going above and beyond the Level 2 of their water shortage contingency plans, activating more ambitious measures. To view the executive order please visit: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/March-2022-Drought-EO.pdf>

## GRANT UPDATE

As you may recall from earlier this year, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) notified the California Olive Oil Council (COOC) that their request for grant funds within the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) under House Resolution 133 (H.R. 133) were approved in the amount of \$446,120. These grant funds were announced in late 2021 in addition to the regular SCBGP funding authorized by the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (“Farm Bill”) the United States Congress has awarded additional one-time SCBGP funding to state departments of agriculture due to the COVID-19 impacts on the food system.

These grant funds will be used to promote California Extra Virgin Olive Oil to consumers in an effort to offset some of the losses experienced in the foodservice sector during the 2020 and 2021 seasons as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This project will focus on highlighting the health and usage benefits of California EVOO through a series of live cooking demonstrations, educational videos, national media campaign, and podcasts. The COOC has begun implementing grant activities and has hired PREM PR & Social to act as the organization’s marketing agency representative. If you have any questions or comments regarding this recent announcement on behalf of the California Olive Oil Council, please do not hesitate to contact the Council office by email at: [ecarranza@calapple.org](mailto:ecarranza@calapple.org).

## COOC COMPETITION

The 2022 COOC Competition is underway! The submitted oils have been distributed to taste panelists and will be evaluated soon. The COOC Competition results can be expected early to mid May. Please feel free to email Elise at [eoliver@calapple.org](mailto:eoliver@calapple.org) if you have any questions.

## 2021 SEAL CERTIFICATION HAS CLOSED

The 2021 Seal Certification Program closed on April 30, 2022. The COOC staff, the Institute for Food and Agriculture (IFA), and the COOC Taste Panel would like to thank everyone who submitted oils to be certified this season! Additionally, the California Olive Oil Council would like to sincerely thank Fresno State's Institute for Food and Agriculture (IFA) for all of their hard work helping to conduct the 2021 Seal Certification Program. IFA played an important role in organizing, packaging, and distributing the submitted oils to the taste panelists. The COOC staff is thankful for all of their efforts this season and we look forward to continue to develop a relationship with Fresno State and IFA in the future.

## SENSORY EVALUATION COURSE OPPORTUNITY

The UC Davis Olive Center is presenting an Introduction to Sensory Evaluation of Olive Oil series on June 24-25, 2022. COOC Taste Panel Leader, Arden Kremer, will guide a tasting focused on California oils and COOC Board Member, Rachelle Bross, will provide an update on research in olive oil and health. If you are interested in learning more about this event, or registering to attend please visit:

<https://olivecenter.ucdavis.edu/events/>



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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- OFFICE CLOSED - Memorial Day
  - May 30, 2022

*Some events are being held virtually. Please contact the COOC office for more information.*

### Find us on social media!



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