

April 2010

Manager
Farmers Market

AUTHENTICITY OF EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

Greetings

Farmers markets do an excellent job in bringing fresh local produce to communities across Australia. However, we are aware that one of the greatest challenges you face is ensuring the authenticity of product for consumers – something that is critical to your continued growth and success. This question of authenticity is also an issue of which we in the olive industry are vitally aware.

Olive oil is a natural cold pressed juice that to be called “Extra Virgin” must legally be both chemically and taste tested to establish that it is compliant with internationally recognised standards. However, there has been widespread improper labeling of untested oils as well as fraudulent substitution of inferior oils or other additives. Some of this, including recent strong action by the ACCC against a number of retailers and distributors, has been reported in the media. Testing in is the only way to ensure authenticity.

In a bid to give certainty to the Australian public that the local product is genuine, the Association has introduced a certification scheme which involves the testing of all oils before being offered for sale. The certification scheme is open to all Australian olive growers, is inexpensive for small growers and involves external independent monitoring and random testing of oils offered for sale. Certified oils can be recognised by the following symbol.



To nurture consumer awareness and highlight the AOA’s quest for integrity and the wide industry adoption of this Australian Certification, we request you circulate this letter to all olive producers participating in farmers’ markets.

Already a great many producers have signed up to the certification process as it is a simple, cost-effective and inexpensive way of ensuring recognition of authenticity and the Australian origins of both Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Table Olives.

Mr John Forrest, the Association’s Industry Development Officer, will be pleased to assist you with any queries or introduce vendors to the certification process. More details are available at www.australianextravirgin.com.au.

Farmer’s markets have been integral in introducing many consumers to the taste and health benefits of Australian Extra virgin olive oil, and the AOA is appreciative of that support.

Best wishes

Paul Miller
President