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California Wildfires Not Expected to Impact Record Olive Oil Production Year

California Olive Oil Council has established a funding mechanism to assist those in need through contributions from the industry

Berkeley, Calif., October 23, 2017- October finds olive oil producers throughout California dusting off equipment, monitoring oil content and preparing for harvest. As the state begins what is expected to be an unprecedented harvest, mother nature challenged the course of events in several oil-producing regions with wildfires in Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake counties and beyond. Overall the industry is expecting only minor setbacks.

The 2017 harvest, taking place from October-December in California, is on track for an estimated total production of 4.3 million gallons. This would be the highest production to date, with the fall 2016 harvest having produced 3.5 million gallons of extra virgin olive oil and 4 million gallons in 2015.

The anticipated landmark numbers are being ushered in at an opportune time for the industry. This harvest coincides with remarkable growth in both production and demand. From 2015 to 2016, nationwide sales of California olive oil experienced almost 40 percent growth year over year according to IRI data. This is 10 times the overall category growth of 4 percent. This upward trend in demand is being reflected in widespread investment in new acreage.

As of August 2017, there are over 40,000 acres planted in California for the production of extra virgin olive oil. This number is comprised of over 400 growers/producers of olive oil in California, with the greatest concentration of olives for oil throughout the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. An additional 20,000 acres are anticipated to be planted by 2020, increasing the total acreage by 50 percent. With the devastation caused by the recent wildfires somewhat isolated to the North Bay region, consumers are likely not to be affected as production volumes and price comparisons are expected to remain constant.

In an effort to support producers impacted by the wildfires, the COOC has established a funding mechanism (<https://www.generosity.com/emergencies-fundraising/wildfire-relief-from-the-ca-olive-oil-industry>) to assist those in need. Contributions will be donated to recovery on behalf of the entire industry. In addition, a registry has been set up on the COOC homepage for those who have been affected to become eligible to receive aid. The COOC remains committed to supporting the farming community while continuing to provide California-grown certified extra virgin olive oil to consumers and retailers nationwide.

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A Quarter-Century of Agricultural Leadership

In March 2017, the California Olive Oil Council (COOC) marked 25 years since its establishment by a group of farmers in 1992. The COOC is a non-profit 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 Seal certifies that an oil is produced only from olives grown in California and has met the criteria to be considered extra virgin. Learn more at COOC.com