



California Olive Oil Council

2019-2020

Standards

As a condition of membership, **all members** who produce a California olive oil labeled as extra virgin must submit their oils annually and prior to the deadline to the Seal Certification Program and agree to abide by all requirements set forth in the Certification Mark and Intellectual Property License Agreement. Failure to submit oils by the deadline will result in non-compliance of membership. Re-packers must complete all appropriate documentation thoroughly by the deadline to remain in good standing. The requirements are provided each year prior to the harvest as noted in Exhibit A below.

EXHIBIT A California Extra Virgin Olive Oil Standards for Certification

- 1) 100% of the oil is from olives grown in the State of California in the United States of America, extracted from the fruit solely by mechanical means under conditions that do not lead to the deterioration of the oil.
- 2) The oil has acidity, in terms of oleic free fatty acid, of not more than 0.5%, a peroxide value of 15 meq O₂/kg or less, and ultra violet absorbency for extra virgin olive oil¹; see UVA standards.² (Please note that the COOC chemical values and other requirements may change prior to October 1st of each year in advance of the certification program year. Members will receive a 30-day notice of any changes.)
- 3) The oil must be organoleptically evaluated by the California Olive Oil Council Sensory Panel and found to be free of defects.

Table 1: COOC Standards & Requirements for Certification		
All Producers		
Sensory	Median of Defects	0
	Median of Fruity	> 0
Free Acidity (FFA) (%m/m)		≤ 0.5
Peroxide Value (PV) (meq O₂/kg oil)		≤ 15
UV Absorbency (UV)	K232	≤ 2.4
	K270	≤ 0.22
	Delta K	≤ 0.01
Producers > 5,000 gallons		
Moisture and Volatiles (MOI) (%m/m)		≤ 0.2
Insoluble Impurities (INI) (%m/m)		≤ 0.1
DAGs (%)		≥ 35
PPP (%)		≤ 17

Should state or federal requirements change after October 1st, these requirements may supersede the COOC

EXHIBIT B Label & Promotional Material Disclosure Requirements

¹ CDFA Grade and Labeling Standards for Olive Oil, Refined-Olive Oil and Olive Pomace, Section 6

² UVA: This test is required for all producers. It is an indicator of oxidation, especially in oils that have been heated in the refining process. It measures the quantity of certain oxidized compounds that resonate on wavelengths of 232 and 270 nanometers (nm) in the ultraviolet spectrophotometer. Delta K may detect oil treatments with color removing substances and the presence of refined or Pomace Oil by measuring absorbency differences.



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The following apply both to labels as well as to promotional materials of all kinds.

Labeling practice for **all** products sold and marketed by COOC members should uphold the mission of the California Olive Oil Council to provide the utmost transparency when referring to extra virgin olive oil. Any language that may be perceived as misleading to consumers with respect to olive oil may be considered a violation of the COOC Code of Ethics.

- (1) If use of “California” in any phrase such as company name, brand name, or other word or group of words, or images that identify California on the label of any oil sold by the member, then 100% of the fruit to produce the oil must come solely from the state of California.
- (2) Varietal Names: If an oil is named under the same nomenclature of the olive varietal used, then the oil must comprise of at least 85% of the fruit (by weight) denoted.
- (3) Provenance: (i) If reference is made to a specific region within California, then at least 85% of the oil must be from olives grown in that region. (ii) If reference is made to a specific estate within California, then at least 95% of the oil must be from olives grown on that estate. (iii) If any phrase such as a company name, brand name, or other word or group of words except for address or legal information, is in conflict with (1), (3i) and/or (3ii), then the actual location or locations in which the olives were grown must be specified on the front facing label, in type not less than 1/3 the size of the phrase, and in geographic specificity no less precise than the phrase; if the oil is from a less-specific region than the phrase implies, then there must be a disclaimer indicating that the oil is not from the implied location, in type not less than 1/3 the size of the phrase.
- (4) Time of Harvest: 100% of the olives used to make the oil must have been harvested during the time period made reference to. Because the bulk of the harvest typically takes place October to December, the COOC seal certification year refers to the harvest year; for example, the 2019-20 harvest season is deemed to be the 2019 certification year. (i) It is not permitted for product consisting of oils from numerous harvests to bear the COOC Seal of Certification.
- (5) Awards: Any reference to an award, prize, certification, or citation must apply to 100% of the oil and clearly state so. Awards must refer to current awards only, not previous years.
- (6) Cultivation Methods: No reference to cultivation standards or practices (such as organic or sustainable) may be made that is not applicable to at least 85% of the fruit (by weight) used to produce the oil and the reference must comply with state and federal definitions and regulations.
- (7) Production Methods: No reference to extraction methods may be made that is not applicable to at least 85% of the fruit (by weight) used to produce the oil.
- (8) Descriptors: (i) Ambiguous or misleading descriptor words or phrases regarding region, state or provenance are prohibited. (ii) Use of promotional vocabulary that makes reference to production from a specific region, state or provenance that does not represent 100% of the production process including but not limited to, growing, milling, and bottling, coming from that specific region, state or provenance is prohibited.
- (9) Should the member be marketing and/or selling olive oil(s) that do not abide by extra virgin standards, the COOC may not be referenced, nor shall the product be marketed or sold as being extra virgin³.
- (10) Members marketing and selling olive oils must submit all labels for approval by the COOC prior to distribution into the market. (i) Flavored oil labels, though excluded from the Seal Certification Program, will be reviewed for compliance and should only make reference to the phrase extra virgin in

³ See Attachment D of Seal Certification Kit



the Ingredient List⁵. Labeling practices should coincide with the FDA Food Labeling Guide⁴.

EXHIBIT C Harvest & ‘Best If Used By’ Dates

- 1) The COOC requires the use of harvest date either in the form of the COOC Mark (of which harvest year is embedded) or if using the Generic Mark, harvest month and year must be clearly indicated on packaging.
- 2) ‘Best If Used By’ dates are not a requirement of the COOC; however, if such is indicated, the date denoted must not exceed 24-month post-harvest.
 - a) Any variance in the above noted recommendation must be supported by technical evidence outlined in Table 1 under “Producers > 5,000 gallons”
 - b) The COOC reserves the right to sample oils that exceed 18 months post-harvest to ensure quality.

EXHIBIT D Trademark and Artwork

- 1) The California Olive Oil Council holds registered ownership of The California Olive Oil Council Certification Mark. Upon full completion of the Certification Mark and Intellectual Property License Agreement, permission to use the COOC Certification Mark⁵ on packaging and for use of marketing, in accordance with, and subject to, the provisions of the Agreement.
- 2) Use of COOC Marks should not portray adaptations in color (See Table 2), proportion, nor be abridged to any dimensions smaller than 7/8” in diameter.
- 3) The Marks should not be altered in any way other than noted above, unless written permissions have been provided by the COOC.

Table 2: COOC Marks Color Scheme				
	Green & Yellow Seal	Green & White Seal	Black & White Seal	Grey Scale Seal
PMS	Green: 343 Yellow: 127	Green: 343 Black: 0	Black: 100% White: (Black) 0%	Black: 100% Grey: (Black)15%

EXHIBIT E Filtering, Racking and Storage

- 1) In order to preserve the highest quality of your olive oil(s), The COOC encourages that producers remove sediment and water from their oil by means of processes such as filtration and/or racking. Excess sediment is amongst the most common contributing factors for oils not meeting extra virgin grade due to anaerobic fermentation, which may also result in a short shelf life.
- 2) Storage of fruit (during harvest and prior to milling) and oil should be in cool, dark spaces, away from light, air and heat, otherwise one risks the increased chance of oxidation. Storage of unracked and/or unfiltered oil over extended periods of time can also contribute to degradation that shorten an oil’s shelf life. Storage vessels should be faultlessly clean prior to use and meet food grade requirements. The COOC encourages that members refrain from the use plastic drums or bags for these practices are vulnerable to leeching, seepage and breakage.

⁴ <https://www.fda.gov/media/81606/download> (See page 17 of Food Labeling Guide)

⁵ United States Patent & Trademark Office - Registration Number: 4674159
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