

The Olive Sector: 2020 vision

Subsidies, international markets, quality and environment within the framework of the new Common Agricultural Policy 2013-2020

PRESS RELEASE

April 2011

The Olive Sector 2020 Vision:

The road ahead is still open!



“The road ahead is still open”. This phrase sums up the proceedings and conclusions of the **2nd International Conference on “The Olive**

Sector 2020 Vision” (Athens-Greece, Evgenides Foundation, April 14-15, 2011), which was organized by



Vaggelis Divaris

AXION Editions and OLIVE & OLIVE OIL magazine, as well as the **Ministry of Rural Development and Food** of the Hellenic Republic, and was co-financed by the **European Union**.

The Ministry’s Special Secretary, Mr. **Evangelos Divaris**, opened the Conference with a welcome address, followed by an address from the major opposition party’s (Nea Dimokratia) parliamentary representative, Mr. **George Kassapidis**.



Georgios Kasapidis

The EU Director, Mr. **Anastasios Chaniotis**, presented **the outline of the new Common Agriculture Policy (CAP)**. Despite the uncertainty caused by total subsidies’ cutbacks and budget reallocations between older and new state-members, the olive sector can rest assured that **the EU support will continue**, as it



Anastasios Haniotis

represents a traditional cultivation that greatly contributes to the local societies (regional development, environmental protection, etc.). The Ministry’s Special Secretary, **Mr. Divaris**, analyzed **national policies** on rural development.

Mr. **Stergios Tatayias** (EU) pinpointed the need for **proper management** and exploitation of EU funds, as olive oil is the product involved above any other in penalties paid by Greece between 1996 and 2006 (a total of 2.5 billion euro)!



Stergios Tatayias

Mr. **Panagiotis Barzoukas**, EU Head of Section Olive oil, as well as Mr. **Jean-Louis Barjol**, the International Olive Council’s Executive Director, offered an

overall presentation of the **global market**, pointing out development perspectives in new



Jean-Louis Barjol

consuming countries, while Mr. **Vlassis Sfyroeras** (EU)



Panagiotis Barzoukas



Vlassis Sfyroeras

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1st round table



Teresa Pérez Millán



2nd round table

presented **promotional programs** on consumption financed by the EU.

The second part of the Conference concerned international markets and was concluded with two round table discussions, coordinated by Mr. **Vassilis Zampounis**, with the participation of **representatives from nine olive producing countries**. In the first round table, the discussion was

held between Ms. **Dimitra Aliefs** (SOVENA Group - Portugal), Mr. **Metin Ölken** (Zeytindostu Olive Oil Association - Turkey), Mr. **Selim Belkhodja** (Union of Olive Oil Exporters - Tunisia), Mr. **Nikos Kouzoupis** (SEKEP Ltd. - Cyprus), and Mr. **Miroslav Bozic** (Ministry of Agriculture - Croatia), while Mr. **Aris Kefalogiannis** (GAEA Products SA - Greece), Mr. **Gennaro Siculo** (National Consortium of Olive Growers CNO - Italy), Ms. **Teresa Maria Pérez Millán** (Spanish Interprofessional Organization - Spain), Mr. **Gaspar Vaño Fernandez** (Interoleo Picual Jaén - Spain), and Mr. **Olivier Nasles** (Interprofessional Organization - France) participated in the second round table.

The representatives **expressed their concern**, as price freeze makes **olive production economically unattractive and its future uncertain**.

As analyzed by Ms. **Teresa Pérez Millán**, the Director of the Spanish Interprofessional Organization, even in Spain, where production has been tripled, now reaching 1.4 million tones, they are pressing for opening of private storage as a temporary solution. Another model was presented by the President of the **French Interprofessional Organization**, Mr. **Olivier Nasles**, according which the **Protected Designation of Origin (P.D.O.) and Protected Geographical Indication (P.G.I.) certified olive oils** achieve higher prices, covering thus the high production costs. All countries' representatives agreed that olive production **can only prosper** through quality improvement, differentiation from seed oils, effective marketing and opening to new consumers. Further **concerns were expressed on "what are the Americans getting at?"** with the Davis University reports. The 2nd report was published only a few days ago and it describes most european extra virgin olive oils available in the US market, the biggest market outside Europe, with a consumption of 280 thousand tones, as irregular and non compliant.

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Andrea Antonio Panico



Antonia Trichopoulou



Dimitrios Boskou



Costas Chartzoulakis



Shimon Lavee

As per the table olive section, presentations were made by the manager of the Confederation of Italian Producers (CIA), Mr. **Andrea Antonio Panico**, and the Panhellenic Association on Table Olives Processors, Packers & Exporters' representative, Mr. **George Konstantopoulos**. The first day of the



G. Konstantopoulos

Conference closed with a lecture from **Prof. Dr. Antonia Trichopoulou**, on the national engagement required in order to ensure and promote the **Mediterranean Diet** and our national food products, followed by a lecture from **Prof. Dimitrios Boskou** (Aristotle University's School of Chemistry) on the bioactive components of olive oil and table olives and their value for human health.

The plates offered during dinner paid tribute to Mediterranean Diet.

The second day of the Conference concerned scientific and technical issues.

Dr. **Costas Chartzoulakis** (Chania NAGREF - Greece) analyzed **irrigation** and water saving issues.

Professors **Shimon Lavee** (Israel) and **Stavros Vemmos** (Greece) referred to recent developments in **varieties** and **planting systems**. They concluded that no variety or method -from traditional to high density planting- can be

rejected a priori, nor can it be considered offering an answer to all questions. Many years of study are required to prove its **adaptation** to each specific country and region, as well as its long-term **economic viability**.

Much attention was drawn to the next session's topic, the much discussed subject of **traceability**, which brought on a lot of questions by the delegates.

Ms. **Rhea Spyridou** (Axion Agro Ltd.), specialized agronomist Ms. **Livia Rinaldi**, and Mr. **John Kaltsis** (PROTYPON Ltd.) presented the application of a complete traceability system coupled with quality specific standard established in four olive producing **Unions in Crete** (Merambello, Mylopotamos, Peza



Stavros Vemmos



**I. Kaltsis, L. Rinaldi,
R. Spyridou, V. Zampounis**

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and Sitia) and in **Italian organization**. The system already developed has been certified according to ISO 22005:08.

The project is realized through Operator's Organizations in the Olive Sector programs of EU Regulation 867/08 and the production infrastructure that the four Unions of Agricultural Cooperatives/ Operator's Organizations in the Olive Sector developed through the relevant programs started in 2004. That traceability begins in the olive grove –where it is being combined with integrated management- and is completed with the labelling of the final product, using the most evolved technology available: the Quick Response (QR) codes.



Olivier Nasles

The first country to develop the PDO/PGI products' system was France and INAO, the National Institute's Vice-President, Mr. **Olivier Nasles**, described the model used. It should be noted that the entire French olive oil production is covered by eight certified PDO/PGIs.



Diego Garcia Gonzalez

The **common milling system** constitutes the only solution for **reduction of olive oil factories' operation cost** and at the same time achieving significant **improvement on quality**, as proven by Mr. **Dimitris Kalafatis**, mechanical engineer and product manager of the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Peza, with application experience in both olive factories operated by the Union.



Dimitris Kalafatis

During the "Food chemistry-Organoleptic analyses" session, Dr. **Diego García González** (Instituto de la Grasa



Efi Christopoulou

- Spain) presented quite impressive results from his study, which has lasted many years. The research has pinpointed the **cerebral areas that are stimulated**



Konstantina Tzia

in relation with the organoleptic attributes and the quality of olive oil. Ms. **Efi Christopoulou** (chemist, General Secretariat of Commerce) referred to the long years of study devoted to the organoleptic evaluation (panel test) and to its importance. Prof. **Konstantina Tzia** (National Technical University of Athens) described all the stages of olive oil and table olive production, as well as the key points regarding quality and safety of these products.

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Before the conclusion of the Conference, two model businessmen presented their work and received an award by the OLIVE & OLIVE OIL magazine: Mr. **Evangelos Kaltsas** (Veloutinos Company), as a young farmers' model, for completing the biological cultivation of the Thassos "Throuba" table olive with the production of an innovative product of high nutritional and commercial value, and Mr. **Aris Kefalogiannis** (GAEA Products SA) for the consortium model of cooperation with the Kritsa Agricultural Cooperative and his devotion to the production of innovative Greek products -i.e. the first carbon neutral extra virgin olive oil- of high quality and significant added value.

**E. Kaltsas, A. Kefalogiannis**

An **open discussion** followed, with the participation of all delegates. No one denied the fact that the olive sector is going through a difficult period. But the conclusion was an optimistic one: **the road ahead is still open**, as long as each and every one of us -at least those who understand and can act- try to!

The **2nd OLIVE & OLIVE OIL Conference** was also an opportunity to remember those that are no longer with us: **Jean-Marc Gazagnes, Costas Vannos, Paraskevas Tokouzbalidis, Nikos Psyllakis, and Crhistos Lembesis.**

During the Conference chaired by Mr. Vassilis Zampounis, agroeconomist and editor of "Olive and Olive Oil" magazine, 33 lectures were presented: from the Ministry of Rural Development and Food of the Hellenic Republic (1), from the E.U. (4), the International Olive Council (1), from Greek (13) and foreign (13) operator's representatives and scientists; and, 45 questions/comments were made by delegates.

It has been two days of constructive interdisciplinary presentation of knowledge, recording of problems and an opportunity for open discussion on improving the future of "our national" product.



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