



Slow Food® Italia

Slow Food Manifesto for Extra Virgin Olive Oil

An immense olive grove , which covers more than a million hectares from Sicily to the Alps foothills , has for centuries been one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Italian agricultural landscape : no other country in the Mediterranean can boast so many varieties , so many different environments and so many local adaptations .

The merit of this extraordinary diffusion goes to the tireless work of generations of farmers who were able to acclimatize and adapt the olive tree in almost all the national territory .

Tied to olive trees and oil , it has developed a whole economy , made of complex relationships between thousands of small growers , low scale millers and merchants , able to "mark " the territory to determine habits and behaviors , through the centuries to build a civilization of olive oil who has reached , almost unchanged, to this day .

Slow Food Italy , an association committed to the protection of biodiversity, identity and traditions of food communities , and local economies that depend on these elements , think it's time to invite the attention of the general danger looming over the Italian olive oil .

The industrialization of modern farming (superintensive systems , aggressive mechanization) made Italian excellent olive oils uncompetitive , relegating them to the margins of a market in which prevails the supply of large quantities of product at a low price because of low quality. To keep alive the Italian olive quality we must instead aim to the unique value that this production has in terms of environment, nutrition , health , landscape , tourism, culture.

On the global market, extra virgin olive oil is often a “certified” product obtained by mixing oils of different origins , therefore devoid of a link with a homeland. Its traceability is practically impossible and check consumer prices incompatible with the costs of production which is attentive to the quality of the result and the process.

• WE AFFIRM THAT •

oil is an agricultural product and as such is subject to the variety of the crops , to the peculiarities of soils and climates , the production techniques that affect them and enshrine its individuality. So it is in the place of agricultural production, meant as its territory , that you must perform the entire cycle of the supply chain, from the olive to bottle, in a system of tight relationships between growers and millers .

• WE APPEAL THAT •

The philosophy of production and consumption focuses on quality and origin, the only way to distinguish our product from anonymous olive oils and certified which are currently dominating the Extra Virgin Italian market. Only then, will the great biodiversity of which is made up, the Italian olive will get the success it deserves.

- **WE STRONGLY WANT** •

To defend olive growing techniques with attention to environmental protection and landscape (you cannot dispose of so important and symbolic capital) and to be able to exploit the rich variety of our country.

- **WE CLEARLT STATE THAT** •

Extra virgin oils must be organoleptically valuable, capable of enhancing the varietal differences, and therefore inextricably linked to the origins of the territory of origin. The quality parameters for the "agricultural oil" cannot be related only to the analytical results, but must include attributes that relate to tracking the history of oil production along the supply chain.

- **WE ARE COMMITTED** •

To develop and / or rebuild the oil culture through educational activities and communication, in line with the above mentioned concepts.

- **WE INVITE** •

All those who use olive oil daily (from the chefs to housewives, school cafeterias, hospitals ...) to support the reasons for this manifesto, engaging in buying habits aware that distinguishing between industrial product and agricultural product favoring the latter .

- **WE WILL BE** •

Together with the producers who want to take action in defense of a production ethic that respects the role and the product of Italian olive with its multiple territorial identities.