

June 2020



AUSTRALIAN OLIVE  
ASSOCIATION<sub>LTD</sub>

# AOA Update

Australian Olive Association news and events

The "AOA Update" is a periodic e-newsletter from the AOA Board to keep AOA members and the wider olive industry up-to-date with the strategic and operational aspects of the Association. Feedback is encouraged via email to [secretariat@australianolives.com.au](mailto:secretariat@australianolives.com.au).

## President's Message



Dear Members,

With harvest completed in most parts of the country, reports of excellent quality are encouraging. Volumes are significantly lower than potential, however, with the flow-on effects of the drought largely to blame.

Through our webinar series, the AOA has continued to provide producers and stakeholders with information and resources to better equip the industry to meet some of the many challenges we

are experiencing.

The AOA team are continuing to work hard behind the scenes to further our role in this area as we prepare to deliver a Virtual Conference and AGM in 2020.

The AOA board continues to meet remotely via video conferencing, remaining abreast of the issues and working cohesively to address them for the benefit of our members, as well as the Australian olive industry more broadly.

The board and CEO are continuing our advocacy activities on behalf of the industry, with Free Trade Agreements and Codex representations, lobbying for an accurate Health Star Rating system, and participation and facilitation within collaborative research and development projects.

The Australian International Olive Awards are going ahead this year with an exciting new format. Innovative and appropriate for the current social restrictions, the 2020 competition will involve both national and international judging panels, all meeting remotely. The awards this year will no doubt be recognised as truly international with Australian and International exhibits and award winners having an outstanding opportunity for recognition and the marketing benefits that follow.

All our members can rest assured we are working hard with a very competent team to ensure the industry is stronger, more resilient, and ultimately more productive as we move forward.

Good health to all.

Regards,  
Michael Thomsett

## CEO's Message

COVID19 has certainly disrupted much of AOA's original planning for 2020 but I am pleased to say that everyone is working hard to restructure our operational activities to cope with the COVID19 environment.



The response to the recent series of webinars has been very positive. We had over 70 register for the final webinar with Pablo Canamasas, and lots of people who couldn't make the live session have watched the video version on the *OliveBiz* website.

Our advocacy program has remained full-on despite COVID19 restrictions. The live meetings have been replaced by video conferences and there's been plenty of them over the last three months. I'm just about over "Zooming" although the up-sides of not having to travel have made it tolerable.

AOA membership renewals for 2020-21 go out from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. Our member contributions are the core of our organisation's financial sustainability. We need everyone to pay their invoice asap, please, so we can continue to support the industry with high quality services.

I have missed not being able to catch up with everyone at the planned workshops and field days, so I can't wait to get back into the paddock as soon the borders re-open nationally. I have no idea when that might be, but it can't come soon enough.

Read on for a summary of what we've been up to.

Greg Seymour  
CEO

## Legislative Alert

### **National Minimum Wage and Modern Award wages increase by 1.75%**

On Friday, 19 June, the Fair Work Commission (FWC) handed down its decision regarding an increase to the National Minimum Wage (NMW). The commission determined that it was appropriate to increase the minimum wage by 1.75 per cent. The new NMW will be \$753.80 or \$19.84 per hour.

The increase will be staggered in three grouped stages based on the impact COVID19 has had on industry sectors:

- Group 1 starts from the first full pay period on or after July 1, 2020
- **Group 2** starts from the first full pay period on or after **November 1, 2020**
- Group 3 starts from the first full pay period on or after February 1, 2021

**Horticulture has been classified under Group 2.** Click [here](#) for more details.

## Advocacy and Representation

### **Industry Strategic Plan Renewal**

The AOA will soon be consulting widely with members and others in the olive industry supply chain to develop a new strategic plan for the continuing development of the olive industry in Australia. The Association will be offering those who wish to have their say, the opportunity to participate in a series of Zoom video conferences planned for the last quarter of this year. Look out for notices in late August with more information on the process, timetable, and where to register to participate in the video conferences.

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### **HSRS for Edible Oils**

Still no news. The Food Forum Ministerial

### **Water**

The AOA was a signatory to a multi-

meeting has been pushed back until July. Stay tuned.

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## **WCO (World Customs Organization)**

The AOA has been working with the Commonwealth Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade to ensure the descriptors in the new olive oil classifications are accurate and reflect the modern commercial environment.

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## **Codex**

The AOA has provided expert advice to the Commonwealth on three e-working group submissions in relation to olive oil standards. We have been liaising with our counterparts in other “New World” producer countries to ensure our governments insist on rules that don’t disadvantage our producers.

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## **AgVet Chemical Review**

The AOA was part of a video consultation with the AgVet Chemical Review Panel in June to provide feedback on the impacts of proposed changes to the AgVet chemical system, and the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. The AOA highlighted that any changes to the current system should not result in increases in the cost of chemicals to producers. The panel will now consider the massive amount of feedback it received from the industry consultation before reporting back to Government towards the end of the year.

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## **AU-EU FTA Update**

Negotiations continue on the Australian FTA with the EU. Things seem to have slowed down during the COVID19 period although the AOA has continued to provide advice to Commonwealth officials on several occasions. New Zealand is also negotiating an FTA with the EU but they are slightly ahead of us in the process. AOA has also been part of the NZ consultation so we can keep an eye out for any negative precedents.

## **AU-UK FTA**

The AOA has been working with the Commonwealth Government in preparing for a free trade agreement. On 17 June Australia and the United Kingdom officially began negotiations for a free trade agreement. Depending on the deal struck by the two governments, this could be an historic event for Australian agriculture.

The United Kingdom was once the top destination for the produce of Australian farmers. The UK’s decision to leave the EU presents Australia with an opportunity to re-establish that relationship. The trading relationship is already strong between our two nations in areas such as services, investment and many goods. Agriculture stands to gain more than nearly any other industry from the Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement.

The key to realising this opportunity is a free trade agreement which reduces tariffs, increases quotas and eliminates non-tariff barriers to a point where Australia’s produce is price-competitive in the UK market. This depends in large part on the exit-deal struck between the UK and the EU.

Given their close proximity (low freight costs) and significant subsidies, European farmers already have an edge. If Australian farmers are to stand a chance, the barriers to entry into the UK must be minimal.

industry submission on the Goulburn to Murray Water Trade Arrangements Review for water transfers. Submissions are now closed but a regulatory impact statement will be released later in the year which will provide another opportunity for industry to comment.

Good widespread rains in April have provided significant inflows to storages. Thankfully that has meant prices for water have retreated from nearly \$1000 per megalitre to about \$200 per megalitre.

There are strong predictions from the Bureau of Meteorology that 2020 will be a wet year for much of Eastern Australia so hopefully we will see storages filling further before the irrigation season begins again.

The predicted rain is good news for our dryland groves so hopefully we will see production increase right across the country for the 2021 season.

# AOA Activities and Initiatives



## Full Steam Ahead with the 2020 Australian International Olive Awards

The Board acknowledges the commercial importance of the competition to the Australian olive industry, particularly the promotional activities of smaller producers, and requested the AIOA committee to find a way to hold the competition in these distanced times.

### Why enter?

- Medals, trophies, industry recognition, promotion and increased sales ... all the benefits of the Australian International Olive Awards (AIOA).
- The AIOA provides producers and growers with the opportunity to have their oil tasted in line with gaining EVOO status and eligibility for *OliveCare*® accreditation.
- Have your oils expertly appraised and comprehensive feedback provided.
- The AOA will create the 2020 Results Book, an incredibly popular addition to last year's competition. The comprehensive, high-quality publication will be provided to all entrants, judges and media, providing a great marketing tool for all medal and award winners.

### International judging panels

- With travel to Adelaide out of the question this year, we will have six four-person judging panels in five states of Australia, along with another six international judging panels based in Spain, Tunisia, Italy, South America, New Zealand and China.
- A panel tasting your oil provides a variety of experience and knowledge, and that combined expertise means a more fair and accurate score for every entry.
- This provides an incredible opportunity for producers to have their oils judged by a large number of top EVOO judges. This will also build the reputation of our high quality oils by exposing them to a wider international judging platform.
- The international judges have all said that they're honoured and thrilled to be a part of this truly global competition.

### What is new

- This year there will be two Best EVOO of Show awards: Best EVOO of Show - Boutique Volume (less than 1000L of the winning oil commercially available) and Best EVOO of Show – Large Volume (1000L or more commercial available). Having the twin awards gives all entrants a greater opportunity to win a “big one” and offers producers of smaller volumes a greater chance of winning a major award.
- The contract processor of any Best of Show winner will be awarded with a certificate recognising their role. The AOA wants to ensure that they have both recognition and something they can promote their business with.

### Key dates

**Entries open:** 1 July 2020 - Enter [HERE](#)

**Entries close: 4 September 2020 at 5pm CST (All entries and oil/table olive samples must be received by 4 Sept).**

**Winners announced: 5 October 2020**

## Results

All entrants will be emailed their personal results and decal order link by Monday, 5 October, including medals won and notification of any major award achievements. With a gathering not possible this year, medal certificates and major awards will be posted to winning entrants. An online presentation will take place in mid-October 2020 as part of the AOA Virtual Conference.

Full competition details and online entry forms are available on the AIOA website: [www.internationaloliveawardsaustralia.com.au](http://www.internationaloliveawardsaustralia.com.au).

For more details contact: Trudie Michels, Competition Convenor & Chief Steward, Mobile: 0419 031 527, Email: [tmichels@globaldial.com](mailto:tmichels@globaldial.com)

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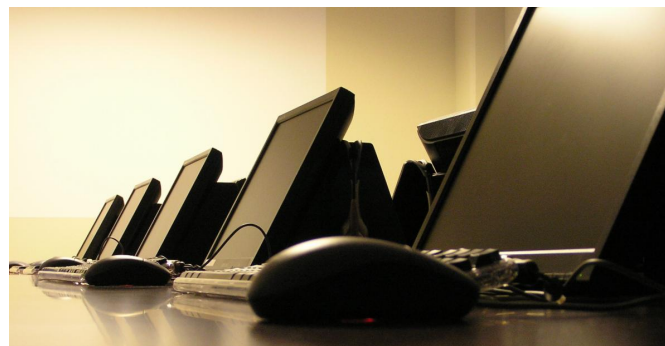
## 2020 Virtual Conference Planned for October

The AOA is excited to announce that it is currently planning a Virtual Conference to be held in October 2020.

The focus of the conference will be on delivering content on olive industry practices, technology and services that maximises production and profits. There will be opportunities to seek advice from local and international experts and to network with peers in a virtual format.

Further details, including the full program, will be announced via email and via the OG&P communications platform in coming weeks.

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## AOA Webinar Series Receives the Thumbs Up

The AOA hosted a series of webinars in May and June covering the remote sensing project, digital marketing and evaluation of processing aids for olive oil extraction

*Excellent information that has implications for and impact on*



and quality improvement. The feedback was extremely positive and was a welcomed response to the postponement of the AOA's planned 2020 workshops due to COVID19 restrictions.

For copies of the presentation notes and to access the video recordings, click on the links below:

- <https://olivebiz.com.au/webinar-evaluation-of-processing-aids/>
- <https://olivebiz.com.au/digital-marketing-series/>
- <https://olivebiz.com.au/webinar-1-overview-of-remote-sensing-project/>
- <https://olivebiz.com.au/webinar-2-national-olive-grove-mapping-project/>
- <https://olivebiz.com.au/webinar-3-update-on-the-irrigation-trials/>

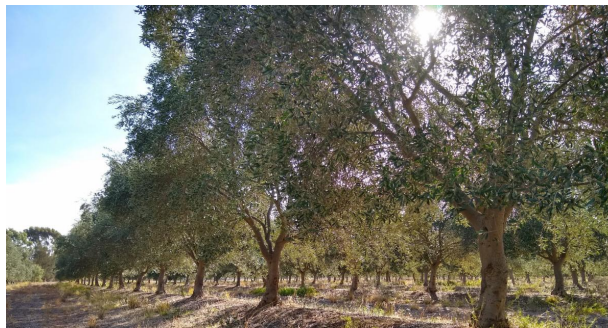
*organoleptic qualities of olive oil, so helping inform better assessment.*

*I will be improving my existing efforts with this guidance.*

*A clear and concise series of presentations that were an eye-opener to me. Thank you.*

*Thank you for your webinar. This was useful to give me some starting points to think about and guidance in how to go about that.*

*Very well presented and interesting workshop.*



## AOA Membership Helping to Build a Sustainable & Profitable Future for the Olive Industry

Are you an Australian Olive Association member? **Thank you!** Membership of the AOA helps to financially support and empower the AOA to represent your interests and to help build a sustainable and profitable future for our industry.

We appreciate your ongoing support and look forward to hearing from you in 2020/21. Please look out for your membership invoices which will be emailed over the next couple of weeks. Please check your SPAM folders and whitelist [secretariat@australianolives.com.au](mailto:secretariat@australianolives.com.au) to ensure you receive your invoice.

Here is a reminder of some of **the many activities the AOA is able to achieve** for the olive industry with your membership contribution:

- Advocacy and Representation - your voice to Government and regulators;
- Industry risk and crisis management – protecting the olive brand and our industry;
- Affiliation and co-ordination with other horticulture and agriculture organizations;
- *Australian Standard for Olive oil and olive pomace oil AS 5264-2011*;
- Code of Practice *OliveCare®*;
- Consumer Awareness & Education Campaigns – Everyday, Fresher Tastes Better!;
- PHA Biosecurity Levy and biosecurity management;
- Australian International Olive Awards and promotions;
- AOA National Industry Conference & Exhibition;
- PR program and point of sale marketing merchandise;
- Market surveillance and reporting;
- Grower field days & seminars;
- Industry communications – *Olivegrower & Processor, Friday Olive Extracts, OliveBiz*;
- AOA Facebook page;
- *TasteBook®* program;

- Registered pesticide minor use permits holder for industry;
- Voice of Horticulture Membership.

Your **membership contribution entitles you to many direct benefits** which can provide you with major competitive advantages:

- The opportunity to obtain certification through the *OliveCare*® program which can provide you with a competitive edge when marketing olive oil;
- Discounted magazine subscriptions and tickets to workshops and the annual industry events such as the National Industry Conference & Exhibition and Australian International Olive Awards – knowledge and awards which can set your business apart;
- Access to the Members Lounge of the AOA website, which contains invaluable olive related resources and exclusive emails relating to export for those signed up to the AOA Export Register.

Not a member? Help us help you. New members receive a FREE copy of the *Olive Growing Book*, valued at \$165. [Click here](#) for more details on the benefits of becoming a member today.

## General News

### Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) Website Update

The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) is an Australian Government service dedicated to help Australians stay smart online. The ACSC has updated its website and URL. Previously <https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/>, its new home is [www.cyber.gov.au](http://www.cyber.gov.au). The new website offers an enhanced experience and functionality for users and hosts all of its information and guidance in one place. Consider signing up to the [ACSC alert service](#), which is a free service for Australian internet users providing information on recent online threats and how they can be managed.

