

MEDIA RELEASE

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Victorian gets best National Extra Virgin Olive Oil Award

Red Rock Olives from Western Victoria was named 'Best Oil of Show' at last night's 12th National Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards dinner held in Canberra.

Over 270 olive growers and industry experts attended the gala which honoured the best in the Australian olive industry. The event was hosted by celebrity chef Peter Howard.

Greg Aimer from Red Rock Olives was awarded the Carol L'Heureux Award trophy for his Red Rock Olives Frantoio Manzanillo extra virgin olive oil. It was a true rise from the ashes for the grove which suffered extensive bushfire damage in January 2006.

Red Rock Olives was also the winner for 'Best of Class 1', dedicated to single-estate grown extra virgin olive oil with a minimum production volume of 200 litres.

Other Awards winners included:

- Jayne Bentivoglio, Rylstone Olive Press (NSW), Cudgegong extra virgin olive oil for 'Best of Class 2 - multi-estate grown with a production volume between 200 and 4,999 litres'
- Darren McKenzie, Viva Olives (SA), Viva Early Harvest extra virgin olive oil for 'Best of Class 3 - multi-estate grown with a production volume greater than 5,000 litres'
- David Cockerill, Cudgegong Valley Olives (NSW), Cudgegong Valley Corregiollo Leccino extra virgin olive oil for 'Best of Class 4 - non-packaged'
- Carol O'Neil, Cradle Coast Olives (TAS), Cradle Coast Paragon extra virgin olive oil for 'Best of Class 5 - micro volume between 50 and 199 litres'
- Geoff Treloar, W2 Olives Oil (NSW), Mandarin olive oil for 'Citrus flavoured oil'
- Knut Kamman, Lakelands Olives (NSW), Ginger Crush olive oil for 'Non-citrus flavoured oil'
- Boort Olive Grove (Boundary Bend Management) for 'Grove of the Year'
- Jim Smyth from the Australian Olive Association's Table Olive subcommittee for 'Service to the industry'

Awards chairman Richard Gawel from the Australian Wine Research Institute, said the National Awards clearly remains the biggest and most competitive of all the major Australian extra virgin olive oil shows.

“The number of medals awarded keeps going up every year, which reflects the increased quality of Australian Extra Virgin olive oil,” Gawel said.

“Australian growers now have over a decade of experience in olive culture and processing and understand the parameters that influence olive oil quality. Consumers of Australian Extra Virgin are reaping the benefits of our growers’ dedication and attention to detail,” he added.

Australian Extra Virgin olive oil is the natural oil from quality olives that have been picked straight off the tree and extracted as soon as possible without the use of chemicals or excessive heat. This ensures that the oil’s remarkable health benefits, flavour and freshness are maximised.

Extra virgin olive oil is the most beneficial olive oil for health and wellbeing. It is rich and diverse in protective antioxidants which help lower bad cholesterol and maintain the beneficial HDL cholesterol.

The 2008 National Awards attracted over 190 entries. The oils were blind tasted by over 20 accredited judges who undertook an organoleptic assessment based on the Australian Olive Association’s 20-point sensory scoring system.

Prior to the judging, the oils were also chemically tested to verify the level of free fatty acid and polyphenols.

Full results of the 12th National Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards will be accessible at www.australianolives.com.au and www.australianolives.com.au.

For more information, contact:

- Australian Olive Expo, (02) 4353 9714, www.australianoliveexpo.com
- Australian Olive Association, (02) 9863 8735, www.australianolives.com.au
- Australian Extra Virgin, (02) 9863 8735, www.australianextravirgin.com.au

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