



Florida Olive Report

Fall 2013

Highlights:

- Fighting for fair trade
- Florida growers and olive tree sightings
- Research program report

Political Action

In December 2012, Council president Michael O'Hara Garcia joined growers, marketers and academics from California, Georgia and Texas testifying before the International Trade Commission (ITC) in support of fair trade practices for the U.S. olive industry.

The assembled advocates asked the ITC to investigate unfair tariffs (over 3,000%), high production subsidies (up to 40%) and the mislabeling of imported extra virgin olive oil (a UC-Davis study found 70% of EVOO failed U.S. and international standards for quality).



Delegations from TX, CA, FL and GA at ITC

According to ITC staff, the investigators completed their travel and are in the final stages of gathering information and drafting the final report to be delivered to the US House Ways and Means committee on August 12, 2013. If the U.S. olive industry allegations are substantiated, the Secretary of Agriculture may choose to issue a [*federal marketing order*](#) and begin to enforce U.S. quality standards. This will hopefully help level the playing field. Domestic producers of high quality extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) will not have to compete unfairly against high-priced low-quality imports and mislabeled foreign product.

Growers and Discoveries

St. Augustine



Several months ago, Council VP and long-time Florida olive grower **Tommy “olive tree radar” Oleson** (left) reported sighting a very large olive tree near the Atlantic Ocean. I would have been skeptical but Tommy knows his olive trees. A few weeks later, **George Jacunski** (right), a St. Augustine attorney and Council advisor took me to see a large olive tree near the beach. It was Tommy’s tree!



Lake Wales



John Gose is a senior grove manager for Lykes Brothers. In addition to his citrus management duties, he is cultivating a small olive test grove at Camp Mack. John has a mix of Arbequina, Arbosona and Koroneiki. Seen here with Lykes employee, Randy Harris (blue shirt), planting two Tunisian Chemlali provided by the Florida Olive Council Research Project (FOCRP).

Gainesville



Council member **Gracy Feiber** (left), can spot an olive tree. While strolling near her house she spied this Picual in a neighbor's front yard. Gracy is also credited with discovering <insert **name**> (right) 5-year old Arbequina growing and fruiting 2 miles from the University of Florida campus.



De Leon Springs



Richard Williams and **Alex Ford** established a 20 acre high-density (6' x 13'- 600 trees/acre) grove in July 2012. Cultivars are Arbequina, Arbosona and Koroneiki. Nine other varieties were planted for observation and research. Williams and Ford are incorporating a modern grove management plan using advanced sensors to optimize plant development and control costs.

Live Oak



Jonathan Carter of Florida Olive Farms established a olive grove near the historic Suwannee River last year and has expanded to approximately 33 acres (21,000 trees) of super high density (5' x 13') planting of Arbequina, Arbosona and Koroneiki. Despite some potassium deficiencies resulting from unusually high flooding in Suwannee County this year and some scale; Jonathan is confident of continued success. He is planting another 15k trees this year.

Marion County



Jonael Bosques,, IFAS agent in Marion County is standing beside a large Arbequina planted some years ago. Looks to be about an 8- 10” caliper. It is growing behind the IFAS Agriculture Extension Office in Ocala. Jonael is planting a Florida Olive Council Research Plot this year



We will keep you informed of developments.

Michael O’Hara Garcia, President
The Florida Olive Council, LAA