

Florida Olive Council Report



(l-r) Wes Wood, Michael O'Hara Garcia, Don Mueller, & Kevin Shaw



(l-r) Mosaic's Dave Crum & Tom Pospichal

UF-IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center hosts Olive Production Seminar

Olives were a hot topic this spring as more Florida farmers explore crop diversification. Dr. Wes Wood, new Director of the [UF-IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center](#) thought growers in the Florida panhandle might have interest in learning more about olive production. Reaching out to the Florida Olive Council, Dr. Wood suggested a half-day seminar on olive growing with emphasis on both small and large farm operations.

Florida Olive Council Advisor, Don Mueller, a 15-year Florida panhandle olive grower and Kevin Shaw, a South Georgia commercial olive grower made detailed presentations about their operations and offered insights into olive growing in the Southeast. Don Muller advocates small farm operations where a variety of olive cultivars offer an opportunity for

Mosaic Installs Olive Grove near Bartow

The [Mosaic Company](#) joined the Florida Olive Council as a Research Partner to explore olive cultivation on formerly mined phosphate lands east of Tampa.

Mined lands are contoured and vegetated in a process called *reclamation*. The topography of Mosaic's reclaimed land is encouraging for olive tree growth. There are gentle slopes, well-drained soils and shallow ponds to temper winter weather extremes.

Continued on 4

Lykes Brothers

Lykes Brothers olive test grove at Camp Mack, FL is thriving after some early challenges

Page 2

FOC Research Facility

The Florida Olive Council announces groundbreaking at new research facility north of Gainesville.

Page 3

Nominations

Council president Michael O'Hara Garcia announces nominations for FOC Board of Directors.

Page 4

Lykes Brothers Grove Thrives



6' 3" [Richard Williams](#) shows off his 2 yr. old Arbequina at De Leon Springs, FL



2012



2014

Florida agribusiness leader [Lykes Brothers](#) established a high-density olive test grove near Camp Mack, FL in 2011. John Gose, Lykes' grove manager, said early problems with moisture had slowed growth of the trees.

Florida Olive Council advisor, [Tony Valenza](#) was called in to evaluate the problem. He suggested some changes to irrigation and the grove has responded well.

Cultivars in the Lykes grove include: Arbequina, Arbosona and Koroneiki. The grove also hosts research varieties donated by the Florida Olive Council. These include Grignan, Chemlali and Manzanillo.

Lykes Brothers have a long history of encouraging development of new crops in Florida. If the Camp Mack test grove proves viable Lykes may consider expanding the grove to a larger site nearby.

Links and News

Get The Hook!

[Olive Oil Times](#) writer Curtis Cord takes IOC President Jean-Louis Barjol to task for boring presentation at recent New York Fancy Foods Show.

Streams

[Florida Olive Seminar](#) at UF-IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center.

FOC President Michael O'Hara Garcia's [radio interview](#) with host John Davis on Ft. Myer's WGCU public radio.

Events

UF-IFAS [Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference](#) August 1-2, 2014

[Master Olive Milling Course](#), UC Davis 9-12 October 2014

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Florida Olive Farms Gears Up for Production with New Mill

Jonathan Carter of [Florida Olive Farms, Inc.](#) announced purchase of a new *Oliomio* 1000 olive mill to provide processing services for north Florida olive growers.

Carter, seen at right inspecting an olive mill in Texas, hopes to have the mill installed for the 2015 crop of olives from his 30-acre super-high-density grove near Live Oak, FL.



Carter said the new mill's capacity may be expanded to 1.5 tons/hr. The facility may later host a custom bottling line for small growers.



New Florida Olive Research Facility

Florida Olive Council breaks ground in June 2014 at La Crosse, FL

The Florida Olive Council announced groundbreaking at the new Florida Olive Research Facility located north of Gainesville, FL. The site will host a greenhouse, research lab and areas for field trials. With a focus on sustainable agriculture, part of the field trial area will be isolated to study organic cultivation methods.

Michael O'Hara Garcia, president of the Florida Olive Council said, "The establishment of this research facility will move us closer to our goal of developing a sustainable and profitable olive industry in Florida."

Garcia added he envisioned multiple uses for the research facility to include hosting studies on essential oils, olive leaf extract and related products. The La Crosse facility will

also provide support for on-going olive research trials at University of Florida (UF-IFAS) research and education centers in Citra, Ocala and Milton, FL.

With a focus on small farm as well as large commercial operations, the site will be configured to accommodate both low-density (100 trees/acre) as well as high-density (600+ trees per acre) in order to determine the best crop style and range of cultivars for various Florida farming enterprises. The site will facilitate both manual and mechanized harvesting methods.

Council advisor [Tom Oleson](#), a long-time north Florida olive grower and UF-IFAS personnel with assist with design. Garcia said he hopes to have some trees in the ground by the end of September 2014.



Dr. Mac Thetford (l.), IFAS horticulturist and Kevin Shaw discuss high-density olive production.



Don Mueller (l.) and olive seminar attendee discuss advantages of a small farm operation.

Olive Production Seminar

cultivars produce high-quality extra virgin olive oil. Muller's [Green Gate Olive Grove](#), a 400-tree operation, was established in Jackson County in 1999 and has been awarded international prizes for its high quality olive oil. Muller has been a leader promoting olive growing in the Southeast, particularly in Florida's panhandle, and was an early advisor to the Shaw Brothers.

Kevin Shaw cultivates a 50+ acre commercial high-density olive grove in addition to directing a large corn, soy and peanut operation. [Georgia Olive Farms](#) produce high quality extra virgin olive oil from 30,000+ Arbequina, Arbosona and Koroneiki trees growing near Lakeland, GA. In addition to high quality olive oil, the Shaw family also produces fine quality, stone ground corn meal (grits). Contact [Vicki Hughes](#) for a tour of the Shaw's olive grove and mill.

Mosaic Test Grove

Ron Olson, senior agronomist at Mosaic, wanted to ensure both small farmers and large commercial enterprises could take advantage of the research. Olson and Tom Pospichal, Mosaic manager of land operations, suggested the project be scheduled in two phases. The first phase, established in May 2014, is a variety trial involving 50 trees of 10 different olive cultivars from Europe and North Africa planted to simulate a small farm operation. The second phase, scheduled for May 2015, will be a one-acre commercial high density trial involving 600 Arbequina, Arbosona, Koroneiki trees and a new variety from [Olint Corporation](#), called *Oliana*.

Dave Crum, Mosaic's grove superintendent, is overseeing the research project and [Mary Beth Henry](#), UF-IFAS small farms agent in Polk County, is helping monitor the Mosaic research project.

FOC Board of Directors Nominations Announced



Ferman



Pizzo



Phillips

Florida Olive Council President Michael O'Hara Garcia announced the nomination of Tampa Bay business leader [James Ferman](#), Tampa attorney [Paul Pizzo](#) and U.S. National Institutes of Health Associate Director [Dr. Steven Phillips](#) to the board of directors of the Florida Olive Council, LAA. Selected nominees will serve a two-year term.