

MINUTES OF THE TABLE OLIVE FORUM MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 11:30

KLEIN JOOSTENBERG FARM, MULDERSVLEI

1. OPENING AND WELCOME

Richard Allen welcomed all attendees to the meeting and thanked them for being there.

2. ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES

Present: Bianka Boezaart, Marickus Brand, Hester de Wet, Sonja Klopper, Amoré Mathee, Nico Mostert, Nicolaas Roodt, Gert van Dyk, Kristel van Tonder, Vittoria Jooste.

3. Apologies: Mr Pieter du Toit, Ms Kelly White and Ms Venishree Mayer.

4. 2021 HARVEST

4.1 Production estimates

Rough estimate for 2020 crop is 500 tonnes. This crop would not be completely sold yet. 2019 production to be compared with 2021 levy income.

5. LEVY INCOME

5.1 2021 income and annual trends

Levy income is in line with 2019 production.

Levy on imports correspond to 1000 tonnes of imported olives. Most of these go directly to food services.

Data on imports cannot be derived from SARS stats as is the case with OO: different tariff codes apply; also depends on types of olives and whether bulk or packaged.

Try to obtain data from retailers on what they import and sell from imports. Also approach W/Cape Dept of Agriculture in this respect. Richard Allen can assist with local picture.

6. COMPETITIONS & TASTING COURSES

6.1 Table Olive Competition 2022

There has been a TO competition in the past.

2022 competition could be in February. Not limited to branded products, as some producers only sell into food services. Panel to be a mixture of SA Olive and chefs.

Working group: Hester de Wet, Nico Mostert, Sonja Klopper will assist Richard Allen.

6.2 Proposed courses for 2022

Table Olive workshop covering both processing and appreciation/tasting. To be run by Linda Costa.

7. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Research projects

Projects approved by Technical Committee and proposed to Board.

Two are continuations of ongoing work, already budgeted for; two are trials for chemicals.

Research on de-bittering of green olives proposed by ARC; initial budget revised down.

Project on reusing brine (Dr Clive Garcin) was not funded by SA Olive. Trialled at Buffet Olives, now looking for private funding.

8. GENERAL

8.1 Table Olive Regulations

TO regulations initially developed by industry; Government took over inspections, using third party auditors with inadequate knowledge. Inspections quietened down due to COVID. Regulations included strange requirements insofar as labelling and packing. Industry persuaded Dept of Agriculture to simplify the regulations and 2016 Regulations were repealed as a result.

Lesson learnt (and applicable to OO): use existing international standards as far as possible; do not support introduction of new regulations; inspections are just money-making.

8.2 Compliance - Food Safety and Quality

SA Olive homegrown food safety system not viable. Olive footprint in retail is too small for retailers to take the risk. Retailers dictate: it is not a matter of choice.

SAO should rather facilitate choice of tools for producers, e.g. basic HACCP, GFSI basic, FSA. Smaller producers can get into food safety compliance mindset without getting certified to begin with.

Intertek do FSA audits on OO.

8.3 Tree Census

Refer to TO Forum minutes.

8.4 Website/Promotion

TO need more exposure; they don't get enough 'time in the sun'.

Increase promotion of TO across all platforms. Themes: general health, Mediterranean Diet, gut health, recipes.

Reposting of SA Olive posts on social media and interacting with posts boosts reach.

TO Competition in 2022 will create more exposure.

Consider a CTC equivalent for TO? Consumers will pay more for a product with a quality seal.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 Wednesday 16 February 2022

10. CLOSURE

There being no further matters to discuss, the meeting was closed at 13.00.