

Palestine Fair Trade Association Olive Oil Specific Guidelines and Standards

1) Palestine Fair Trade Association Guidelines:

Fair Price and Fair Wage:

The price buyers need to pay for the product must be based on the cost of maintaining and harvesting the olives, ensuring that every Palestinian farmer receives adequate wages for the harvest season. The price must be of a minimum that is economically worthy of production. The criterion calls for a minimum guaranteed price that covers the cost of production and ensures a living wage for growers. A living wage implies people can cover basic needs, including food, shelter, education, and health care for their families.

Reinvest in the Community:

Every year Palestine Fair Trade Association donates olive trees to small farms for the annual tree planting festival: February 15. This is an effort to reinvest in the olive making industry and ensure its future success. We recommend that fair trading importers follow suite by reinvesting in the industries and communities they are benefiting from.

2) Guidelines for Farmers and/or Producers:

Farming Methods:

Farmers are required to use natural and traditional farming methods. No genetically modified olives are accepted into the program. Cultivating must be done traditionally by hand picking. Machine cultivated olives do not qualify for fair-trade.

Wages:

Farmers who do not pick their own olives are required to pay a minimum of 1/3 of the harvest to their workers who harvest the olives in Mass years (good year season) and a minimum of 1/2 of the harvest in a Shatoun year (off year season). The olive seasons in Palestine are bi-annual: one season high production the following season low production rate. Preference is given to cooperative harvesting communities.

Co-operatives:

For all harvest seasons we encourage collective efforts (by neighbors, extended families, a group of women, or friends, etc...) to cultivate larger farms. This principle fosters community development beyond the harvest and increases social capital within communities. Olive oil presses should be collectively owned and run. Such a requirement promotes democratic and collective principles within communities, principles the fair trade process seeks to maintain.

3) Press Guidelines:

Semi-Automatic Cold Press:

Semi-automatic cold press owners shall collect one out of every ten parts (i.e. for every ten liters of oil the press collects one liter from the farmer). Palestine Fair Trade Association promotes share distribution as a form of payment for press use because it allows press owners and farmers to remain on equal profit margins based on the seasons productivity.

Full Automatic Press:

Full automatic press owners shall collect one out of every fifteen parts (i.e. for every fifteen liters of oil the press collects one liter from the farmer).

Press Workers:

If a press does not run on a basis of a workers co-operative for the season than press owners will pay a minimum of ten kilos of olive oil per one shift day.

4) Environmental Guidelines:**Environmental Concern:**

All products used in the farming, pressing, and general production of the olive oil are expected to be environmentally friendly. This implies the use of recyclable, and/or biodegradable materials. By supporting traditional farming methods, that have a history of being environmentally friendly in turn creates a sustainable farming industry. This can be illustrated by the existence of 1000 year old olive trees in Palestine.

By-Products:

All by-products of olive oil production should be arranged for reuse in some other form of production. If there is no infrastructure already in place at certain farms or presses producers and importers will need to implement such practices. The low-grade oil can be used for soap; the olive pits can be dried and used for the traditional Palestinian bread baking oven: the Tabun. No by-products should go to waste.

5) Olive Oil Standards:**Acidity:**

All olive oil production that is part of the Palestine Fair Trade Association program must contain less than 1.2% acidity for sale in US markets and less than 0.8% acidity for EU markets.

Peroxide:

All olive oil production that is a part of the Palestine Fair Trade Association program must contain a peroxide level below 20 for sale in EU markets.

General Quality:

Olive Oil that is a part of the Palestine Fair Trade Association program must be free from any foreign substances and have no unusual smell, taste, or color.