

LISBON MANIFESTO

OF THE OLIVE OIL WORLD CONGRESS

“Extra Virgin Olive Oil: Scientific Evidence for Global Health”

This Manifesto brings together the scientific consensus on the benefits of extra virgin olive oil for human health and calls on governments, international organisations and healthcare systems to integrate EVOO into their public health strategies for the prevention of chronic non-communicable diseases.

Olive Oil World Congress — Lisbon, 2 and 3 July, 2026

PREAMBLE

Within the framework of the Olive Oil World Congress, held in Lisbon on 2 and 3 July 2026, representatives from across the global olive oil sector hereby endorse this Manifesto.

This Manifesto seeks to consolidate the scientific consensus on the health benefits of extra virgin olive oil (EVOO), encourage the adoption of evidence-based public policies and promote the consumption of EVOO as a means of improving public health worldwide.

Recalling that:

- **Extra virgin olive oil** is a cornerstone of the Mediterranean diet, which was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 and is among the dietary patterns most strongly supported by scientific evidence for the prevention of chronic non-communicable diseases;
- The olive tree (*Olea europaea*) embodies more than six thousand years of history, culture and medicine in the Mediterranean basin, and its therapeutic uses have been documented across numerous civilisations since antiquity;
- The International Olive Council (IOC), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have formally acknowledged the nutritional and cardiovascular health benefits associated with olive oil;
- The Olive Oil World Congress brings together leading researchers, health professionals and stakeholders across the global olive oil sector, united by the shared goal of strengthening the relationship between scientific research, human health and olive oil production.

Recognising that:

- Decades of rigorous scientific research, including the PREDIMED study— the largest clinical trial ever conducted on the Mediterranean diet and cardiovascular health, involving more than 7,000 participants followed for nearly five years—have shown that a Mediterranean dietary pattern enriched with extra virgin olive oil can reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events by approximately 30% compared with a control diet;
- Extra virgin olive oil is a particularly rich dietary source of oleic acid—a monounsaturated fatty acid with well-established cardioprotective effects—as well as of biologically active compounds, including the polyphenols oleocanthal, oleuropein and hydroxytyrosol, whose anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and neuroprotective properties are supported by a growing body of scientific evidence;
- Oleocanthal, a phenolic compound characteristic of extra virgin olive oil, has been shown in laboratory studies to act on the same inflammatory pathways as ibuprofen—an analogy based on mechanism rather than therapeutic effect—and may therefore contribute to preventing chronic diseases associated with systemic inflammation, a major cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide;
- A substantial body of scientific research associates EVOO consumption with a lower risk of breast, colorectal and prostate cancer. Proposed mechanisms, based largely on experimental and observational studies, include the induction of cellular apoptosis, the inhibition of tumour angiogenesis and the protection of DNA against oxidative damage;
- Regular EVOO consumption may help to improve insulin sensitivity, lower fasting blood glucose levels and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome, conditions that affect more than 500 million people worldwide and place an immense burden on healthcare systems;
- The latest scientific evidence, presented at the Sixth International Congress on Olive Oils and Health, held in Jaén in June 2026 and co-organized by the Universities of Jaén and Navarra and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, highlights the significant neuroprotective potential of EVOO and its possible role in preventing cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative conditions;
- The EFSA has officially recognised that olive oil polyphenols help protect LDL cholesterol particles from oxidative damage, a key process in the development of atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease. The geographical divide between olive oil-producing countries and regions bearing the greatest burden of chronic non-communicable diseases presents both a major public health challenge and an opportunity to extend the documented health benefits of extra virgin olive oil to populations worldwide.

Affirming that:

- The available scientific evidence supports the inclusion of extra virgin olive oil in national and international dietary guidelines as the preferred source of healthy fat for the general population;
- Promoting EVOO consumption is not merely a sectoral objective, but a public health priority with the potential to make a direct and measurable contribution to reducing mortality from cardiovascular, oncological and neurodegenerative conditions;
- Cooperation between the olive oil sector and the scientific community is essential to ensuring the quality, authenticity and traceability of the olive oil supplied to consumers—prerequisites for maximizing its potential health benefits;
- Current scientific evidence identifies EVOO as one of the healthiest sources of dietary fat. Its consumption should nevertheless remain within the recommended daily limits

for total daily fat intake. EVOO should therefore be promoted as the preferred source of fat within a balanced diet that complies with internationally established macronutrient guidelines.

WE HEREBY DECLARE

1. EVOO as a functional food for cardiovascular health

The signatories recognise and endorse the substantial body of scientific evidence supporting the regular consumption of extra virgin olive oil as part of a dietary strategy to prevent cardiovascular disease. The PREDIMED trial and its subsequent follow-up studies provide the most robust scientific basis currently available for recommending EVOO as the principal source of fat in a cardioprotective diet. A Mediterranean dietary pattern enriched with extra virgin olive oil has been associated with an approximately 30% reduction in the combined risk of stroke, myocardial infarction and cardiovascular death compared with a control diet. This finding relates to the dietary pattern as a whole rather than to EVOO considered in isolation.

The signatories undertake to promote the inclusion of this evidence in cardiovascular health strategies worldwide and to encourage the recognition of EVOO as an integral component of evidence-based approaches to cardiovascular disease prevention and management.

2. EVOO polyphenols: beyond its fatty acid profile

The signatories emphasise that the health benefits of extra virgin olive oil extend beyond its fatty acid composition. The polyphenols found in EVOO—including oleocanthal, oleuropein and hydroxytyrosol—contribute to its potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, complementing and potentially enhancing the cardioprotective effects of oleic acid.

The signatories call for further research into the mechanisms of action of these compounds, the development of standardised analytical methods for quantifying them and the inclusion of polyphenol content information on olive oil labels, thereby enabling consumers to make better-informed dietary choices. Oleocanthal acts as a natural anti-inflammatory through mechanisms shown in laboratory studies to resemble those of ibuprofen. This comparison relates solely to its mechanism of action and does not imply an equivalent therapeutic effect. Regular consumption of oleocanthal-rich EVOO as part of a Mediterranean dietary pattern may contribute to reducing the risk of chronic inflammation-related conditions, including arthritis, cardiovascular disease and certain cancers.

3. EVOO and cancer prevention

The signatories recognise the growing body of scientific evidence associating the regular consumption of extra virgin olive oil with a lower risk of certain cancers, particularly breast, colorectal and prostate cancer. This evidence is derived predominantly from observational and mechanistic studies. The proposed mechanisms, which remain under investigation, include epigenetic modulation, the induction of apoptosis, the inhibition of tumour growth and protection against oxidative damage caused by free radicals.

National and international public health bodies are called upon to consider the role of EVOO in primary cancer prevention strategies. The scientific community is also urged to continue

investigating the underlying biological mechanisms through molecular biology, nutritional epidemiology and precision medicine.

4. EVOO, metabolic health and diabetes prevention

The signatories recognise the potential role of extra virgin olive oil in improving glycaemic control, reducing insulin resistance and helping prevent type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome. Clinical and epidemiological studies indicate that regular EVOO consumption may improve glycaemic profiles, reduce the low-grade inflammation associated with obesity and enhance peripheral insulin sensitivity.

Against the backdrop of the global epidemics of obesity and diabetes—with diabetes alone affecting more than 500 million people worldwide—the signatories consider it a priority to incorporate EVOO into evidence-based strategies for the prevention and management of metabolic disorders and to actively promote its consumption among populations at risk.

5. EVOO and neurological health: a new research frontier

The signatories recognise the emerging and promising role of extra virgin olive oil in supporting brain health and potentially helping prevent age-related cognitive decline. Recent scientific evidence suggests that the bioactive compounds of EVOO—particularly oleocanthal—may help reduce the accumulation of amyloid and tau proteins in the brain, both of which play a central role in the pathogenesis of Alzheimer’s disease.

The signatories express their strong support for further research into the potential role of EVOO in preventing dementia and other neurodegenerative diseases. They call upon the international scientific—particularly researchers in neurology, geriatrics and nutritional epidemiology—to intensify its efforts in this strategically important field.

6. The Mediterranean diet with EVOO as a global health heritage

The signatories reaffirm that extra virgin olive oil is a cornerstone of the Mediterranean diet—the dietary pattern with the strongest body of scientific evidence supporting its role in preventing chronic non-communicable diseases. They call on international health organisations, including the WHO, FAO and PAHO, to formally recognise EVOO as a functional food of significance to global public health.

They further advocate the Mediterranean diet as a healthy, sustainable and accessible dietary model that can be adapted to the diverse culinary cultures worldwide, thereby contributing simultaneously to human health, environmental sustainability and the development of rural communities in olive oil-producing regions.

Although rooted in the Mediterranean diet, the health benefits of extra virgin olive oil are not confined to Mediterranean cultures. Dietary fats are present in every culinary tradition and are subject to recommended minimum and maximum intake levels. Choosing EVOO as “the fat of choice” enables people worldwide to incorporate its cardioprotective and anti-inflammatory properties—and its potential neuroprotective benefits—into their diets without imposing cultural barriers or restricting its use to Mediterranean contexts.

COMMITMENTS AND CALL TO ACTION

The signatories to this Lisbon Manifesto commit to working together in a coordinated and sustained manner to advance the following actions:

- **Update dietary guidelines.** Advocate the revision of national and international dietary guidelines to include specific, quantified recommendations on extra virgin olive oil consumption and recognise EVOO as a preferred source of healthy dietary fat.

- **Fund scientific research.** Promote increased funding for high-quality research into the effects of EVOO on human health, particularly in the fields of neuroprotection, cancer prevention, metabolic health and healthy longevity.
- **Train healthcare professionals.** Promote nutrition education and training for doctors, nurses, dietitians, nutritionists and pharmacists on the health benefits of EVOO and the quality criteria that influence its preventive and health-promoting potential.
- **Ensure quality, authenticity and traceability.** Support the development of robust control and traceability mechanisms to ensure that the olive oil supplied to consumers retains the bioactive compounds associated with its health benefits, with particular attention to polyphenol content.
- **Integrate EVOO into health and care settings.** Collaborate with public authorities to develop policies promoting EVOO consumption in hospitals, care homes, school canteens and primary care centres as an affordable, high-impact measure for supporting public health and disease prevention.
- **Advance international cooperation.** Strengthen collaboration among research centres, universities and public health bodies to accelerate the translation of scientific knowledge about EVOO into clinical practice, nutrition policies and chronic disease prevention strategies.
- **Improve consumer communication.** Develop rigorous, accessible and evidence-based communication and public awareness campaigns, ensuring that consumers have ready access to clear and comprehensible information through all appropriate channels, including product labelling.
- **Develop inclusive communication strategies.** Overcome cultural and geographical barriers by presenting EVOO as an accessible, adaptable and evidence-supported source of healthy fat. Public messaging should emphasise that EVOO can enhance dietary patterns from any culinary tradition, thereby supporting its recognition as a food of relevance to global health.
- **Combat misinformation.** Actively counter misinformation about dietary fats and olive oil by promoting public access to reliable scientific evidence and challenging unsubstantiated claims that may undermine public health or misrepresent the benefits of EVOO.
- **Strengthen cooperation among signatories.** Foster collaboration among the organisations endorsing this Manifesto and those that may join it in the future, particularly in scientific research and the effective dissemination of its findings.

JOINT MANIFESTO

Representatives of scientific and healthcare institutions, together with organisations across the global olive oil sector, have come together to issue this Joint Manifesto, expressly endorsing the recognition of extra virgin olive oil as a food of exceptional value to human health, supported by decades of rigorous scientific research.

The signatories commit to working in a coordinated manner to ensure that the scientific evidence on EVOO is translated into effective public health policies worldwide and that extra virgin olive oil is recognised, promoted and made accessible as a means of supporting disease prevention, health and well-being for people across the globe.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

Each signatory undertakes to present this Manifesto to their respective governments, health systems, international organisations and competent authorities, with a view to promoting public policies and collaborative strategies that recognise EVOO as a valuable public health resource and facilitate its integration into healthcare systems and chronic disease prevention programmes.

The signatories further undertake to contribute to building an international scientific consensus on the value of extra virgin olive oil for human health and to uphold quality, authenticity and research as the cornerstones of an olive oil value chain committed to health and well-being worldwide.

September 2026

Olive Oil World Congress

Congress President

General Coordinator

Scientific note: *This Manifesto is grounded in the available scientific evidence, including findings from the PREDIMED and PREDIMED-Plus studies, research presented at the Sixth International Congress on Olive Oils and Health (Jaén, 2026), reports issued by the International Olive Council, scientific opinions and communications published by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and evidence-based nutrition research conducted by the Universities of Jaén and Navarra and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.*

SIGNATORY ORGANIZATIONS



Portugal



Spain



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THE OLIVE OIL CONNOISSEUR
Greece



Portugal



Italy



Brazil



CIHEAM
ZARAGOZA

Spain



Spain



Italy



CUOR D'VERDE
Italy



Darmmess
EARLY HARVEST PREMIUM
EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
HUILE D'OLIVE VIERGE EXTRA
HIGH PHENOLIC
Lebanon



Dazeite
OLIVE OIL BUSINESS
Portugal



Oli de Mallorca
DENOMINACIÓ D'ORIGEN
Spain



Montenegro



Brazil



Spain



Spain



Italy



Desde 1990
**FUNDACIÓN
DEL OLIVAR**
BASE DE LA DIETA MEDITERRÁNEA

Spain



Fundación
Patrimonio
Comunal Olivarero
Spain



Pakistan



Instituto Brasileiro de Olivicultura

Brazil



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institutos nacionais
de ciência e tecnologia

Brazil



Oliva e Azeite
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Centro Nacional de Competências para a
Inovação Tecnológica do Setor Agroalimentar

Portugal



Croatia



JAHANGIR TVTC
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Iran



Loralai Olives
Pakistan



Oleaphen
Cyprus



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Olive Health
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Netherlands



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A Project of Government of Pakistan

Pakistan



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de Porto Alegre

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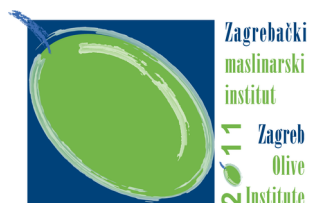


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