

ARISTOIL

“Reinforcement of Mediterranean olive oil sector competitiveness through development and application of innovative production and quality control methodologies related to olive oil health protecting properties”

PRIORITY AXIS:

OBJECTIVE: The guide for production and quality control of olive oil with increased health protecting properties, which will be published for use by all stakeholders.

Project website: <http://aristoil.interreg-med.eu/>

DELIVERABLE Number: 4.1.2

Title of DELIVERABLE: Certificate center service

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WP n.: 4

PARTNER IN CHARGE: University of Cordoba

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Introduction

This document summarizes the main activities developed by the two Certification Centers appointed by the Aristoil Consortium in the frame of this Project. The two entities that have participated as Certification Centers are the University of Athens (UoA, Greece) and University of Cordoba (UCO, Spain). They have been involved in all work packages (WPs) included in the Aristoil Project, but special emphasis is put in WP3 and WP4, Training and Testing, respectively, which were led by both institutions. Thus, the role of both Certification Centers has been key for the development and success of the Aristoil Project. In the next section, the activities developed by both institutions collect the service carried out by them.

Certification Centers Service

WP3. Activity 3.1. Development of methodology for monitoring olive oil quality.

- Optimization of analytical methods: UoA and UCO have developed the two methods for quantitative analysis of phenolic compounds according to the health claim of the EFSA that supports the European Commission EU432/2012. In parallel, they have participated in other analytical developments such as those based on the evaluation of virgin olive oil stability according to the phenolic profile.
- The two Certification Centers have analyzed in the execution period a total number of 6000 samples. They have validated their methods and they have the capability to evaluate the health properties of olive oils provided by producers.
- The two Certification Centers provide certificates of analysis to producers who demand the service and are interested in improve the health benefits of their products.

WP3. Activity 3.2. Investigation of production parameters influencing the quality of olive oil.

- The two Certification Centers are prepared to develop additional studies to evaluate the incidence of specific variables on the phenolic composition of olive oil. They have studied the influence of main variables associated to the production process in the frame of the Aristoil Project and, of course, they are prepared to evaluate the influence of other variables to support producers to improve the health benefits of their products.

WP 3. Activity 3.3 and 3.4. Operational instrument and Preparation for Pilot Activity.

- The two Certification Centers have defined the procedure to establish a new Certification Center. Thus, the University of Split is prepared to become a new Certification Center by using the method proposed by UCO. UCO is following and supporting this process.
- The two Certification Centers have convinced a set of producers to introduce technical modifications in their production process to improve the quality properties of the EVOOs.

WP 4. Activity 4.1. Pilot activity. Certification Centers in Greece and Spain.

- The two Certification Centers have proved their capability to prepare a Guide of Recommended Practices to improve the health benefits of EVOO. This open-access Guide will be updated in the next years with the data obtained in other agronomical seasons in order to increase the representativity of the data.

WP 4. Activity 4.2. Training activities.

- The personnel involved in the two Certification Centers is prepared and formed to train stakeholders with interest in the production, distribution and commercialization of EVOO with high phenolic content and, therefore, with increased healthy properties.

WP 5. Activities 5.1 and 5.3. Activities related with the MED cluster.

- Personnel of the two Certification Centers are prepared to develop tasks demanded by the MED cluster: formation, promotion and research.

WP 5. Activities 5.2. Transferring of know-how

- The personnel of the two Certification Centers have participated in activities related with the transference of know-how to consumers, clinical specialists, and distributors to emphasize the health benefits of EVOO as compared to other fats.

Future activities

The Certification Centers will be important agents in the transition phase after the end of the Aristoil Project. They will be active contributors in the formation of the MED Cluster for producers with high phenolic EVOOs. Thus, the main activities to be developed by the Certification Centers will be:

- Research related with the health benefits and quality of EVOO.
- Analysis of olive oil samples to evaluate the health properties associated to the phenolic content.
- Training activities for producers, distributors and commercialization agents.
- Diffusion of health properties of EVOO enriched in phenolic compounds.