

Greco-Italian cooperation

For more than a decade, the Italian recognized Organizations of Producers, members of Italia Olivicola, and numerous Greek recognized Organizations of Producers, clustered around Axion Agro Ltd, have been cooperating closely to a common traceability project for olive oil and table olives that is certified according to the norm UNI ISO 22005:08.

Today, more POs, clustered under Agron Sa, have joined the original group of Greco-Italian cooperatives in the common effort for traceability.

Food Traceability became compulsory in the E.U. in 2002 in order to ensure food safety but the Greco-Italian common system goes far beyond this first goal.

The system secures the quality of traced olive oil and table olives to consumers all over the globe while also ensuring sheer transparency of the production processes. Also, within the system, checks on the application of the best agricultural practices play a key role in the protection of the environment during the production of olive oil and table olives.

A further advantage of the Greco-Italian Traceability system lays within the certainty of the products geographical origin as 100% Italian and 100% Greek.

QUALITY OLIVE PRODUCTS

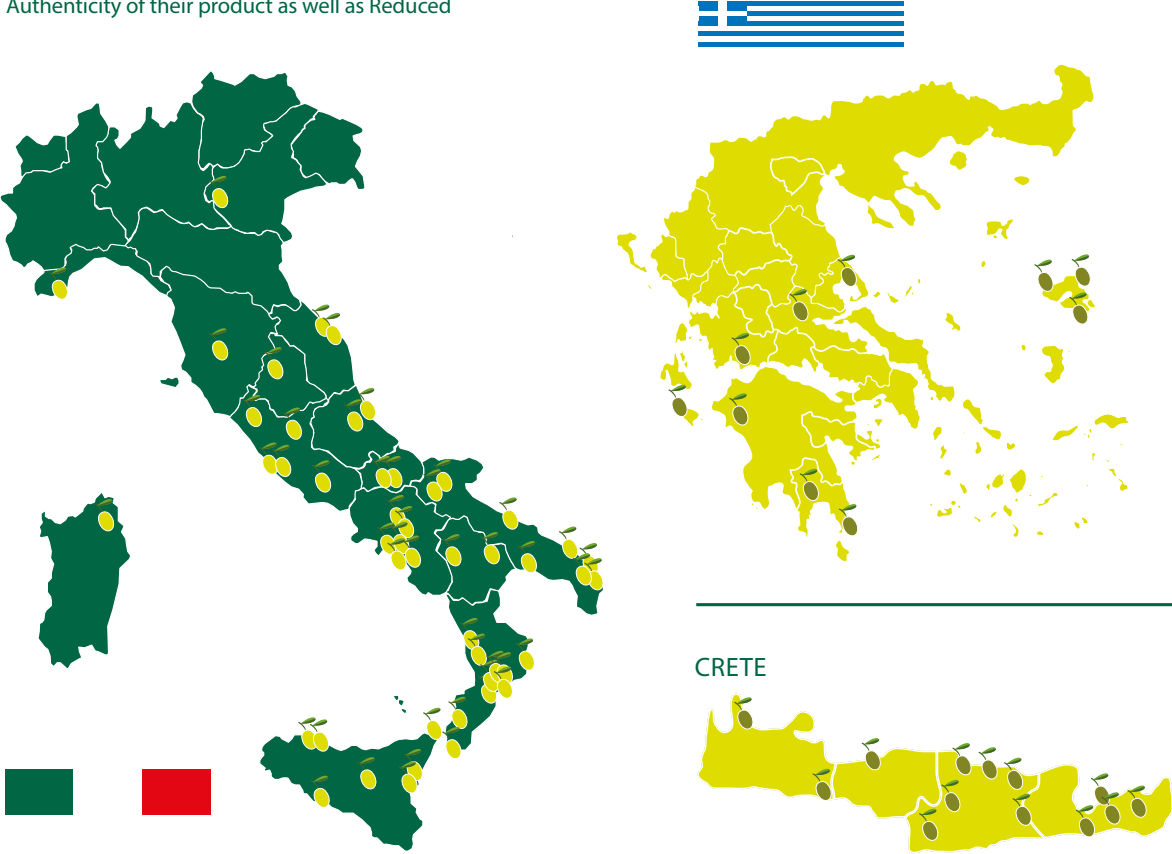
Two Countries, One Tradition



Traceability

Traceability is a system that allows us to trace each single step of the production process of a food product from the table back to the field where everything started. We can also trace every component introduced in the production process including main and secondary packaging. The traceability system records where the food is from, who produced it, how and through what process it took its shape. This is extremely important for many reasons the first of which is Safety. Should anything go wrong with a food, traceability is able to find in a very short time, where and by whom it was produced, under what circumstances, the companies involved in the producing and selling, and to whom it was sold. Immediate measures can therefore be taken in order to withdraw the product from the market, should that be necessary to protect consumers' health. The Organizations of Producers did not stop here but went all the way. Traceability requires a lot of effort from the producers in terms of work and investment. Additionally, the producers needs to undergo many checks by national Authorities and Certification Bodies. Nevertheless, it's worth their effort since once certified, the producers and their organizations can claim documented Quality and Authenticity of their product as well as Reduced

Environmental Impact of their production processes. Finally, traceability allows the geographical origin of a product to be claimed. Why is it so important? Italy and Greece have many things in common, they do share the same sea, have similar climates and gorgeous landscapes. Their territories, thus articulated and varied, express a great biodiversity and consequently a great variety of food produces, all pillars of the Mediterranean diet, UNESCO's intangible heritage, renowned worldwide for its positive effect on human health. Olive oil is the strongest pillar. Landscapes are scattered with olive trees of different varieties. Hundreds of olive tree cultivars are numbered among the two countries, each one different from the other and able to give birth to oils of different tastes and flavours. Olive oils can be sweet, bitter, spicy, fruity and show an incredible range of different aromas depending on the olive varieties they come from. This represents a unique richness and a great opportunity for perfect food combinations. Meat, fish, vegetables, soups and pastas, raw and cooked food they all have the oil that perfectly matches and completes the dish.



GREEK Varietal Olive Oil Characteristics

KORONEIKI
KORONEIKI is the principal Greek variety and accounts for 60% of total production since it can be cultivated up to 500m. Nevertheless each region boasts of subtle differences both in aromas and in taste. The Koroneiki Extra Virgins produced from its golden green fruit usually have an intense character, full mouth, are sometimes bitterish and have a strong peppery taste particularly when early harvested olives are used in order to secure high polyphenol content. The aromas of freshly cut green grass and green leaves are very strong and depending on the region green apples or pepper and artichoke. KORONEIKI olive oils may vary a lot but they are usually paired with grilled meats and roasts, grilled chicken, freshly toasted bread with herbs, strong tasting sea fish and vegetable dishes.

ATHINOLIA
ATHINOLIA or Tsounati is a strong variety which can be cultivated up to 1,000m and is cultivated on the mountainous areas of Crete and central Peloponnese. The fruit of ATHINOLIA is small but rich in olive oil and is also used to produce green cracked table olives. The quality of the Extra Virgins produced is very high and mild in all its characteristics. Its rich fruitiness is combined with a well-balanced bitterness and peppery taste. It is highly valued because it also gives soft olive oils, much softer than the Koroneiki Extra Virgins even when the fruit is not fully ripe and therefore high in polyphenols. ATHINOLIA olive oil could be called the golden medium. It is a versatile olive oil that can be happily paired with almost everything.

MANAKI
MANAKI or Kothreiki is a sturdy variety which prevails in central Greece and northwestern Peloponnese. It can be cultivated even on stoneridden soil but of course does better in average soil. MANAKI gives the sweetest olive oil of all other Greek varieties. The fruit is small and roundish and average in olive oil rendering. The flavours of its Extra Virgin olive oils are mild to the palate with fragrant fruitiness, pleasing freshness of green grass blades enriched with a touch of almond and artichoke. This is a very prestigious variety and very sought after but it is produced in much less quantities than Koroneiki. MANAKI due to its sweetness goes well with salads dressed with fruits and nuts and fresh water fish and stews with spices.

ITALIAN Varietal Olive Oil Characteristics

CORATINA
Coratina is one of the most widespread varieties in Puglia, the most productive region in terms of olive oil production. It is a late variety with constant production and high oil yield, whose name is linked to its geographical origin, the town of Corato in the province of Bari. Coratina oil has a strong character because of its very high content of polyphenols (natural antioxidants) with consequent strong bitter and spicy taste and an intense fruity aroma with a prevailing hint of almond and sensations of fresh grass/leaf and artichoke. Such characteristics make oils containing the Coratina variety very suitable for meat and intensely flavoured dishes.

CAROLEA
Widespread throughout the south of Italy, Carolea is one of the main varieties of Calabria, the second region, after Puglia, for olive oil production. It's a dual-purpose variety which can be therefore used for the production of both table olives and olive oil. It is a variety with alternating production and high oil yield. The organoleptic profile of the Carolea oil is characterized by a medium level of fruitiness, bitterness and spiciness, with prevalent herbaceous sensations and light hints of fresh almond, artichoke and tomato. It is ideal in combination with a wide range of different foods, from salads to meat and desserts.

BIANCOLILLA
Biancolilla is a cultivar mostly cultivated in Sicily. It is a local variety that has high but alternating productivity and low oil yield. It has a clear fruity taste, with a well-balanced level of bitterness and spiciness. This variety can be found as monovarietal oil or combined in blends. Fresh grass, artichoke, almond and tomato are the characteristic flavours. Biancolilla olive oil is excellent for seasoning fish or vegetable dishes, and can also be used for making cakes as it effectively replaces butter or seed oil.

FRANTOIO
Frantoio is a variety grown mostly in Umbria, Marche and Tuscany. It has high and constant productivity and medium oil content. It is also appreciated for its adaptability. The oil has a well-balanced level of fruitiness, spiciness and bitterness, medium-intense levels with a prevailing hint of fresh almonds and light sensations of grass / leaf and artichoke. Suggested food combination are those with the typical Tuscan gastronomy like bruschettas, soups and meat.