

Benchmark Your Ability as an Olive Oil Taster

A one-day short course to measure and improve your olive oil tasting skills

Monday July 27, 2015

SRJC Shone Farm Pavilion, 7450 Steve Olsen Lane, Forestville, CA. [Directions here.](#)

Who should attend? This program has been developed for those who are seeking to extend their olive oil tasting skills and for those who wish to benchmark their proficiency in assessing olive oil quality.

Practical tasting exercises show you:

- How to recognize the positive and negative characters in olive oil.
- How to identify quality variations between extra virgin olive oils.
- How consistent you are in assessing extra virgin olive oil quality.
- How your proficiency in assessing extra virgin olive oil quality compares with others.
- **And, we'll taste this year's award-winning olive oils and discuss the secrets of how they were made.**

Presented by Paul Vossen and Richard Gawel, two of the New World's most knowledgeable olive oil tasters, with 40 years of combined experience.

Registration Fee: \$200. [Register here.](#) Or contact Lisa at (707) 565-2050, lkbell@ucanr.edu
Includes University of California certificate of attendance, individual taste test results, and lunch.

Program

8:30 – 9:00: Registration – Coffee

9:00 – 11:00: **Identifying olive oil aromas and flavors:** Aroma compounds associated with a wide variety of positive and defective notes in olive oil will be presented for reference. Classic examples of both common and less common olive oil defects will also be presented for discussion. Several olive oils will be tasted with the aim of identifying their flavor attributes.

11:00 – 11:15: Break

11:15 – 12:30: **Introduction to quality variation in extra virgin olive oil:** Several extra virgin olive oils will be tasted to demonstrate the characteristics that can be used to differentiate between mediocre, good, and excellent quality examples. Instructors will discuss olive oil styles, freshness, varietal character, fruitiness, harmony, and balance.

12:30 – 1:30 pm: Catered Lunch

1:30 – 3:45: **Putting everything into practice. Assessing taster consistency:** Tasters will assess 20 olive oils and categorize them on the basis of overall quality and flavor profile. The relationships between oil quality, method of production and their chemistry will be discussed. The exercise is also designed to enable taster consistency to be statistically quantified.

3:45 – 4:00 (over a coffee): **How tasting consistency is measured and interpreted.** Taster results and comparisons from previous courses will be summarized (confidentially) to provide a benchmark for each taster. Presentation of certificates.

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- *You will be introduced to the key aroma compounds responsible for both positive and defective characteristics of olive oil.*
 - *Two expert instructors will present classic ‘you won’t die wondering’ examples of all the major defects in olive oil (fusty, musty, winy, rancid, frosted and muddy sediment), as well as some of the less commonly encountered defects.*
 - *Then they will present examples of positive fruit flavor characteristics in olive oil as well as bitterness and pungency.*
 - *You will learn how to assess extra virgin olive oil quality within the different style categories by tasting some of the best, award winning olive oils from major international competitions.*
 - *After an extensive tasting session, participants will be able to benchmark their own abilities for assessing extra virgin olive oil quality and consistency compared to other tasters.*
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Instructors



Richard Gawel is a long time appointee as presiding judge of the Australian National and a head judge at the Los Angeles International and the Japan International extra virgin olive oil competitions. Richard is a former lecturer in sensory science at the University of Adelaide and at the Le Cordon Bleu Culinary School. He has authored a number of peer-reviewed papers on the statistical evaluation of the consistency of expert tasters, and the taste properties of polyphenols. He trained the first olive oil taste panel in the Southern Hemisphere to be recognized by the IOC. In addition to being very active in training Australian producers in olive oil assessment at both the basic and advanced levels, he is currently a full time research scientist investigating active polyphenols. Qualifications: BSc, MAgSc, Grad Dip Ed., Grad Dip Wine Sc., Cert IV Workplace training and assessment.



Paul Vossen has been a University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) – Farm Advisor in Sonoma and Marin Counties since 1980. His agronomic expertise is in the area of specialty crops including oil olives. He was a founder of the California Olive Oil Council, UC Davis Olive Center, and he developed the first olive oil taste panel in the USA to become recognized by the International Olive Oil Council in 2001. He is currently the panel leader for the UCCE taste panel in Santa Rosa, CA. He has been an olive oil judge and has trained other judges for several olive oil competitions all over the world. As a UC researcher and educator he has authored several scientific papers, videos, and book chapters on olive oil production, processing, and sensory evaluation. He has taught several UC short courses and seminars on those subjects. He also works as a private consultant helping producers all over the world to make and market the best olive oil possible.

Contact, to register by mail: Lisa Bell, lbkbell@ucanr.edu, 707-565-2050