



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Danielle Griffin
O: (559) 650-3229/C: (559) 994-3133

BIG FRESNO FAIR'S 10th ANNUAL SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY OLIVE OIL COMPETITION IS NOW UNDERWAY

All California olive oil producers are eligible to participate; deadline is March 28

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, January 24, 2025...Entries are now being accepted for the 10th annual San Joaquin Valley Olive Oil Competition (SJVOOC); Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Flavored Olive Oil entries from commercial producers in the State of California are eligible and olive oil must be made from producers' most recent olive harvest. Deadline for entries is March 28, 2025.

"This year marks a decade of celebrating California's incredible olive oil producers through this competition and we couldn't be more excited to continue shining a spotlight on their craftsmanship," said Christina Estrada, CEO of The Big Fresno Fair. "It's especially meaningful to honor our local producers with the 'Best of the Valley' category, showcasing the exceptional quality of olive oils from right here in our region."

Participating producers must enter their harvest into one of two different classes: Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Flavored Olive Oil. Competition categories in the Extra Virgin Olive Oil class include: Spanish Blends (arbequina, arbosana, etc.); Spanish Singles; Italian Blends (ascolano, etc.); Italian Singles; Other Blends (picholine, barouni, etc.); and Other Singles. Competition categories in the Flavored Olive Oil class include: Citrus; Herbal (rosemary; basil, etc.); Pepper (chile, jalapeno, habanero, etc.); and Other Flavors (garlic, truffle, etc.).

Awards will be given out for Gold and Silver medals in each category, as well as one overall "Best of Show" in both the Extra Virgin Olive Oil category, Flavored Oil category and the "Best of the Valley" award. Judging will be evaluated and scored as follows:

- **Gold Medal:** Awarded to an olive oil that demonstrates its type and/or varietal character, balance, structure and complexities to the highest standards. Gold Medals will be awarded to those oils receiving scores between 86 - 100 points.
- **Silver Medal:** Awarded to an olive oil reflecting the correct distribution of balance and character of its type or variety; an oil deemed to be well crafted and of excellent quality. Silver Medals will be awarded to those oils receiving scores between 76 - 85.99 points.
- **Best of Show:** Awarded to an olive oil recognized to possess special characteristics of the highest quality overall. All Gold Medal winners are eligible to compete for Best of Show in their division.
- **Best of the Valley:** Awarded to the oil that scored the highest with the ranch or office located in the San Joaquin Valley. Medals will be awarded for both EVOO and flavored oils. (Kern, Tulare, Kings, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties eligible)

Producers may submit multiple entries under one category but may not submit a particular entry to more than one category. All entries must be available for commercial sale at the time of entry. Entries are due by March 28, 2025. Winners will be announced on May 1, 2025 by 5:00 p.m.





Gold Medal, Best of the Valley and Best of Show winners will all have the opportunity to have a booth in the Agricultural Building on one day during the 2025 Big Fresno Fair where they can taste, display and sell their award-winning product. Additionally, educational information will be set up so that Fairgoers can learn more about the art of making olive oil, its health benefits and more.

Each submission must include an entry form, at least two 250 ml bottles of the olive oil with retail labels attached and a \$60 non-refundable fee per entry. Each entry must also contain a third-party chemical analysis in order to verify extra virgin status. Entries can be dropped off at The Big Fresno Fair Administration Office or can be shipped to SJVOOC – The Big Fresno Fair, 1121 S. Chance Ave. Fresno, CA 93702 no later than 4:30 p.m. on March 28, 2025. Any entry delivered by mail, freight or express must be prepaid. The Administration Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for drop-offs.

Last year, 54 entries from throughout California were received. A complete list of 2024 winners can be found at www.FresnoFair.com/SJVOOC. The website also has additional SJVOOC details including a downloadable entry form. Email questions to Cindy Suarez at agriculture@fresnofair.com or call her at (559) 285-9209.

About The Big Fresno Fair:

The Big Fresno Fair, founded in 1884, is the 5th largest fair in the state of California and represents the 21st District Agricultural Association. An average of 500,000 people from throughout the state visit The Big Fresno Fair each year, making it the largest annual event in the Central Valley. Members of the Board of Directors include: Terry Gonsalves, President; Gary Chahil, Vice President; Frank Flores, Secretary/Treasurer; Linda Mae Balakian Hunsucker; Jerry Pacheco; Annalisa Perea, Chuck Riojas and Lawrence Salinas. Christina Estrada heads the daily operations in her role as CEO. The 2025 Big Fresno Fair will run October 1 – 12. For more details, please visit www.FresnoFair.com.

#

