OLIVE OIL COMMISSION OF CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WEDNESDAY
March 20, 2026
1:00 p.m.

Hilton Stockton
2323 Grand Canal Blvd.
Stockton, CA 95207

Zoom Information
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83813923069

M I N U T E S

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Jackie Kennedy called the meeting of the OOCC Board of Directors to order at 1:00 p.m. The following Board Members were in attendance:

i. Roll Call

Jackie KENNEDY*	-	Kennedy Ranch
Jim LIPMAN*	-	California Olive Ranch
Matt LOHSE*	-	Big W Ranch
Mikayla GNOSS	-	Capay Valley Ranches
Conor CHURCHIN	-	Cobram Estate Olives
Jeff CHARTER*	-	Jeff Charter Farming
Jeff COLOMBINI*	-	Lodi Farming
Michael FOX*	-	California Olive Ranch
Mary MORI	-	California Olive Ranch
Leandro RAVETTI*	-	Cobram Estate Olives
Andy GNOSS	-	G&S Milling
Cliff LITTLE*	-	Corto Olive
Jonathan SCIABICA	-	Sciabica Family California
Bruce GOLINO*	-	OOCC
Alexandra KICENIK DEVARENNE	-	CalAthena
Mark SIEVERS*	-	II. Fiorello Olive Oil Company

STAFF:

Todd SANDERS	-	Olive Oil Commission of California
Michelle BORGES	-	Olive Oil Commission of California
Mary MCDONNELL	-	Olive Oil Commission of California
Ethan CRANMER	-	Olive Oil Commission of California
Janette RAMOS	-	Olive Oil Commission of California

GUESTS

Dennis MANDERFIELD	-	CDFA
Dan KENNEDY	-	Kennedy Ranch
Adam ENGLEHARDT	-	Englehardt Ag Services
Brittany FAGUNDES	-	California Olive Ranch
Jaime HOWE	-	Westlake Farms
Kimberly HOULDING	-	AOOPA

*Denotes voting members for the Committee

ii. Establish Quorum

With the appropriate number of Directors from producers and handlers present, a quorum was established.

iii. Approval of the Minutes – ACTION

The minutes of the January 14, 2026, meeting was presented to the Board for approval.

- **MOVED by FOX, duly seconded by LOHSE, and unanimously carried THAT the minutes of January 14, 2026, be approved as presented. (MOTION 3-20-26 #1)**

II. CHAIRWOMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairwoman Jackie thanked the board members and guests for attending the meeting.

III. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATE

Legislative Language for Grade Standards (Currently in Grade and Standards Committee)

In 2024, the OOCC Board of Directors discussed revisiting and adjusting the standard for olive oil. OOCC staff and KSC worked on legislative language to allow grade standards to be determined by CDFA, as recommended by the commission, rather than by US Federal Standards. There were three primary buckets in this legislative language.

1. **HSC Section 113877: Olive oil grades**
   a. "…quality, purity, labeling standards for extra virgin olive oil are otherwise established by the Department of Food and Agriculture in the 'Grade and Labeling Standards for Olive Oil, Refined-Olive Oil, and Olive-Pomace Oil…"
2. **Adjusts the Commission's Marketing Year for Budgeting Consistency: January 1 to December 31**
   a. Current marketing year is July 1 to June 30
3. **Add to the Powers and Duties Article to allow the commission to conduct olive oil data collection**
   a. Market price and volume information based on prices paid by handlers to producers by region and by variety

Previous Timeline

October 2025: OOCC staff and KSC looked at initial steps for the authority of the commission to set the standard. In October, KSC began to draft a proposal and provide an estimated monthly retainer of $6,000.

December 16, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting: After reviewing the timeline and olive oil legislative language, the board decided to schedule another meeting after the holidays to take a formal vote.

January 14, 2026, Board of Directors Meeting: The board voted to table the standards law proposal and recommended that the OOCC Grade and Standards Committee review this legislative effort.

SB 54 and SB 343 Litigation

On March 4, 2026, the OOCC Board of Directors had a special meeting to vote to join the litigation regarding all of the single-use packaging that must be recyclable, and compostable by 2032 to meet the requirements of SB 54. The approximate cost of joining this coalition is $20,000. There are about 15 other commodity and trade associations that joined the litigation. KSC will be representing the OOCC throughout this case.

USDA Programs/Trump Administration

Some new programs are coming down the pipeline in conjunction with the Trump Administration policy priorities for Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) and America and Farmers First programs. OOCC staff will send policy updates as we hear more information regarding some of these new programs.

IV. GRADE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE

i. Sampling Program Update

A total of 18 mills submitted data to the OOCC this season, with 12 mills exceeding the 5,000- gallon threshold and qualifying for CDFA random sampling. All scheduled CDFA sampling has been completed, and all collected olive oil samples have been sent to the laboratories for chemical and sensory evaluation. At this time, 7 of the 12 mandatory mills being sampled have received their testing results and have been issued a Member in Good Standing certificate.

A total of **4.29 million gallons** of olive oil were reported to the OOCC this season, compared to 3.66 million gallons reported last season, representing a significant increase in reported volume.

Steps Remaining:

1. Distribute testing results to mills as they become available.
2. UC Davis to complete the Final Annual Sampling Program Report (target completion date: May 15).

ii. Olive Ring Test Update

The 2025-2026 OOCC Ring Test is nearing completion. Shirley from UC Davis provided a preliminary summary of this season's ring test, including participation and overall performance observations.

iii. OOCC Lab Accreditation Website Page

At the request of the Board of Directors, the OOCC added an Accredited Laboratories page to the website identifying U.S.-based, fee-for-service laboratories that hold IOC or AOCS accreditation specifically aligned with OOCC quality and purity standards. The list was developed to ensure handlers and voluntary members have clear guidance on laboratories qualified to perform the required chemical and sensory analyses.

iv. Toll Processing Outreach Plan

The OOCC determined the 2026–2027 harvest season will be the appropriate time to begin enforcing the new law encompassing toll processors. This timeline allows the Commission time to finalize guidelines and develop a strategic outreach plan to ensure industry awareness and compliance. The following outreach opportunities have been identified as initial next steps:
1. Obtain Board of Directors approval and dispersion of the Toll Processing Decision Tree document.
2. Utilize a one-page informational handout for distribution at the Annual Olive Oil Conference outlining the new enforcement structure and what to expect next season.
3. Begin announcements in the OOCC newsletter regarding the new law going into effect.
4. Work with handlers to obtain toll processing contacts to compile a comprehensive outreach list and conduct direct outreach prior to next season.
5. Issue an industry-wide announcement outlining requirements and timelines.

v. Decision Tree Document - ACTION

As of January 1, 2026, the new law expanding the scope of the Commission to include toll processing has gone into effect. The upcoming season will be the first year of enforcement.
The Grades and Standards Committee reviewed the Decision Tree document to clarify how toll processors fall under Commission requirements before formal notices are issued. The Committee recommended approval of the revised document to ensure the guidance is as clear and straightforward as possible for industry participants.

- **MOVED by FOX, duly seconded by COLOMBINI, and unanimously carried THAT the Board of Directors approve the newly revised Decision Tree Document as presented. (MOTION 3-20-26 #2)**

V. RESEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Research Committee requests that all funded research projects provide interim progress reports. Becky Wheeler Dykes provided an update to the Research Committee on her project, noting that the results indicate it is not a viable option for growers. Based on this information, the Committee has decided to conclude the project at this time.

2025-2026 RESEARCH PROJECTS

Researcher	Project	Amount
Jim Adaskaveg*	Epidemiology and Management of Olive Knot Caused by Pseudomonas Savastanoi pv. Savastanoi	$7,500
Joel Kimmelshue	Land IQ Acreage	$34,700
Becky Wheeler-Dykes	Developing an Understanding of Sap Analysis for Nutrient Management in Olives Grown for Oil	$35,534
	Total:	**$77,734**

*Project co-funded by the California Olive Committee

VI. OLIVE OIL CONFERENCE

The Olive Oil Conference officially concluded. Staff thanked the Board and everyone who helped make this year's event a success, and asked everyone to take a moment to scan the QR code to share their thoughts and feedback on the conference. Next year the Olive Oil Conference will be held March 17-19, 2027, at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District in Clovis.

VII. FINANCIAL UPDATE

Todd Sanders presented the Board the following:

i. Balance Sheet
ii. Profit & Loss

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

The board discussed Research and Promotion. After much discussion, the board took a roll call vote, and unimously decided to officially oppose the Research and Promotion. Staff will submit a formal letter to USDA explaining their lack of support for olive oil Research and Promotion board. Staff will present the letter to the Executive Committee for approval before moving forward.

- **MOVED by COLOMBINI, duly seconded by LOHSE, and unanimously carried THAT the Board officially oppose the Research and Promotion and submit a formal letter to USDA explaining their lack of support for olive oil Research and Promotion board. (MOTION 3-20-26 #3)**

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

i. Board Member Attendance Policy - ACTION

Directors are expected to attend and actively participate in all meetings of the Board and any committees on which they serve. Directors should attend at least **75% of scheduled meetings each year**.
Directors unable to attend a meeting should notify the Board Chair or OOCC Staff. Attendance will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

If a director misses three consecutive meetings or fails to meet the annual attendance expectation, the Board Chair will discuss the matter with the Executive Director. Continued failure to meet attendance expectations may result in review by the Executive Committee and possible recommendation for resignation or non-renewal of the director's term.

- **MOVED by LOHSE, duly seconded by RAVETTI, and unanimously carried THAT the Board approve an attendance policy, which states, failure to meet Board of Directors meeting attendance may result in possible recommendation for resignation, or non-renewal of the director's term. (MOTION 3-20-26 #4)**

ii. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held in June.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Jackie Kennedy adjourned the meeting of the OOCC Board of Directors at 2:33 p.m.

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Todd W. Sanders
Executive Director
Olive Oil Commission of California

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS FOR MARCH 20, 2026

MOTION 3-20-26 #1 APPROVED

MOVED by FOX, duly seconded by LOHSE, and unanimously carried THAT the minutes of January 14, 2026, be approved as presented.

MOTION 3-20-26 #2 APPROVED

MOVED by FOX, duly seconded by COLOMBINI, and unanimously carried THAT the Board of Directors approve the newly revised Decision Tree Document as presented.

MOTION 3-20-26 #3 APPROVED

MOVED by COLOMBINI, duly seconded by LOHSE, and unanimously carried THAT the Board officially oppose the Research and Promotion and submit a formal letter to USDA explaining their lack of support for olive oil Research and Promotion board.

MOTION 3-20-26 #4 APPROVED

MOVED by LOHSE, duly seconded by RAVETTI, and unanimously carried THAT the Board approve an attendance policy, which states, failure to meet Board of Directors meeting attendance may result in possible recommendation or resignation.