

FoodMatch Sustainability Practices

FoodMatch consistently delivers superior taste and overall quality of Greek olives. We understand and respect the concerns surrounding importing products from around the world and sustainable practices. We pride ourselves on full traceability of our products, the support we provide to communities throughout Greece and our local community involvement.

We believe the best possible way to define sustainability is for us to act in a manner that preserves the environment now and for future generations. It's imperative to support local communities wherever they're located around the world. For us, this means working with small local growers in Greece, Italy, Southern France, California, wherever we find an opportunity to preserve a way of life, while bringing exceptional quality olives to the US market.

The olive producing communities of Greece rely on the export of their crop and the importance of naturally cultivated and cured olives cannot be understated. Divina olives are cultivated on moderate acreage on farms that are tended by small family operations. Through our personal relationship with our growers, we support entire communities and preserve not only the way of life in the community for generations past and generations to come, but we also protect the biodiversity and ecological integrity of the environment in these regions.

As conscientious producers, our olive processing plant has waste management systems in place and recycles paper and tin. In 2009, our plant will begin supplying bio-treated wastewater to farmers for irrigation of crops (for any crop industry).

It's not simply the families of these farms that we support. It's the entire community who aid the cultivation, harvesting, curing, processing and packaging of the olives. We preserve traditions that allow generations to continue the craft perfected by their ancestors. We preserve the biodiversity of the environment, preventing the loss of the land and ancient trees to development.

We believe in integrity, hands-on care, appropriate acreage density, minimal irrigation, natural curing and full traceability. We believe our support provides cultural, economic and environmental security for this generation and generations to come.

Based on the annual volume of olives we secure, we support the following number of independent farms:

- Halkidiki Olives
 - Approximately 173 growers
- Organic Green Olives
 - 2 growers
- Other Green Olives
 - Approximately 16 growers
- Kalamata Olives
 - Approximately 153 growers
- Organic Kalamata Olives
 - Approximately 6 growers
- Black Amfissa Olives
 - Approximately 6 growers
- Blond Olives
 - Approximately 6 growers

PACKAGING

Packaging of food products presents numerous challenges. As food suppliers we do not have as many green options as other industries. The safety of food must come first to protect the health of the public. In our industry FoodMatch is viewed as an innovator and early adopter of new technologies that reduce packaging waste.

- We seek and adapt options that
 - Reduce weight – more efficient freight load
 - Reduce waste volume
 - Reduce product loss from breakage
 - Reduce product loss from spoilage

FoodMatch was the first in the olive industry to convert bulk packaging from large heavy industrial plastic kegs to lightweight vacuum-packed bags in corrugated boxes.

Switching from standard industrial kegs to bags-in-box resulted in a 40% reduction in overall packaging, and an 80% reduction in plastic usage. (Comparison was based on relative drained weight, e.g. the amount of packaging required for the same volume of olives.) In regards shipping efficiency, this switch offered an approximate 10% increase in actual product volume (drained weight) on standard 40 ft containers. That is to say, we were able to ship more olives and less plastic per container.

LOCAL INVOLVEMENT:

FoodMatch is the dedicated sponsor of a ground-breaking City Harvest program that supports both CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) and needy families in the South Bronx. Through farmers, chefs and educators, families receive freshly harvested produce, learn about nutrition and receive hands-on classes on how to cook with their weekly market basket.

FoodMatch is a founding member of the Mediterranean Foods Alliance, an organization that strives to educate people about the health benefits of the Mediterranean Diet. Research suggests that obesity and food-related diseases can be prevented when a Mediterranean Diet is followed. FoodMatch supports all-natural foods that are minimally processed with no additives, providing the maximum nutritional benefits.

FoodMatch is a supporter of Slow Food USA and a member of the Whole Grains Council.