



## **Climate change is damaging olive oil production**

### **Damage to olive oil production caused by climate change demands urgent intervention**

Climate change is undoubtedly the most important environmental issue the world is facing today and one that is already heavily affecting olive oil producing areas, especially in the Mediterranean basin.

For millennia, the olive tree has been an essential part of the Mediterranean region, shaping landscapes and influencing cultural traditions. Even though the plant is tougher than vines, thrives in different terrains and can also adapt to various climate conditions, extreme temperatures pose severe risks.

Olive trees have not only been proven to protect biodiversity, improve soil quality and reduce desertification, but there is also evidence that they can remove atmospheric carbon dioxide and trap it in the soil. In fact, many scientific studies have documented the positive effects of olive growing on the environment.

The Mediterranean basin region, where more than 90 percent of the world's olive oil is produced, is expected to be exposed to higher temperatures in the future due to global climate changes. This is predicted to cause unfavorable growing conditions, leading to negative effects on oil production and quality.

In the last year alone, damage caused by adverse weather conditions to olive oil production has reinforced those predictions: Italy's production dropped by more than half, that of Greece by 35 percent and that of Portugal by a fifth.

The results of recent studies underline the urgent need to better prepare for the consequences of climate change, its effects on olive quantity and the future quality of olive oil.

The challenge taken by several European projects is to develop effective tools and resilient cultivation practices that support olive oil producers in the battle to maintain production and quality against the onslaught of climate change.

The international TAICHI project is providing extensive and comprehensive information about the world of European olive oil across Mainland China and Taiwan. The aim is to increase cultural awareness and improve local knowledge of this extraordinary food.

Co-funded by the EU and promoted by the two main consortia of Italian olive growers, Italia Olivicola and UNAPOL, the TAICHI project offers consumers all the information they need to understand olive oil through its website, various social media platforms and OurOliveOil APP – available in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).



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