

EN
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Answer given by Mr Hansen
on behalf of the European Commission
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Different categories of olive oil are defined in Part VIII of Annex VII of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products¹. Commission Delegated Regulation 2022/2104 on olive oil marketing standards² further defines olive oil categories on the basis of several physico-chemical and two organoleptic characteristics. The Commission considers this classification as robust and there are no plans to change it at this stage.

Organoleptic characteristics are tested by the organoleptic method, which was developed by the International Olive Council (IOC) in 1992. Since then, the method was improved on several occasions by EU experts working within the IOC expert groups. As the European Union is a member of the IOC, it is bound to apply IOC methods. No other standardised method exists to test the organoleptic characteristics of virgin olive oils.

Nevertheless, the Commission is aware that part of the sector is not satisfied with the organoleptic method. Therefore, under the Horizon 2020³, the Commission prioritised and financed research and innovation on the assessment of the qualities of olive oil, leading to the OLEUM project^{4 5}. The results of the project include a new method determining volatile compounds, which is currently further developed by the IOC.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007;
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1308/2023-01-01>.

² Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/2104 of 29 July 2022 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards marketing standards for olive oil, and repealing Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2568/91 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 29/2012; http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2022/2104/oj.

³ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en.

⁴ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/635690>.

⁵ <https://www.oleumproject.eu/>.