



### Olivar de la Luna

*Producer: Olivar de la Luna*

*Region: Pozoblanco, north of Cordoba, Andalucia, Spain*

*Employees: Four full-time and one part time employee*

#### **Authenticity**

*The product or recipe is native to the producer's region and has historically been part of the regional food culture.*

Olive oil production was introduced to Spain by the Romans, with the Iberian Peninsula supplying much of the olive oil used by the Roman Empire. Olive oil is integral to Spain and Spanish cuisine and has been used for centuries in medicinal and culinary recipes. In the Sierra Moreno hills, known as the Sierra de la Luna, the olive trees are over 200 years old and are of a variety that grows exclusively in this region - the Nevadillo Blanco olive. Up until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Sierra Moreno mountains were a land of bandits and political exiles. King Carlos III used the olive tree as a tool to bring the region under control by offering free land to any citizen who cleared the land and cultivated olive trees. While many wealthy folks flocked to the region, they brought many more poor folks along with them to do the work of clearing the land. These hard working farmers worked by day for their employers, but used the light of the moon to clear their own land at night. The Santa Casilda farm, where the Olivar de la Luna olives are cultivated was just such a farm - a working family farm that has been organically cultivated since it was established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Board Response & Questions:**

*Excellent - Great story about Santa Casilda farm.*

*Olive oil has been integral to Spain and its cuisine and way of life for centuries.*

#### **Local Sourcing**

*A majority of all ingredients are purchased within the region in which the company is located (region is defined as bioregion or country depending on the size and geographic make up of the area), AND is either grown directly by the producing company or is purchased direct from the farmer or a farmer organization at fair prices.*

**Ingredients:** 100% organic extra virgin olive oil from Nevadilla Blanca olives

Olivar de la Luna cultivates all of the olives used for their olive oil on their farm, Santa Casilda, located in Pozoblanco, in the Sierra Moreno mountains to the north of Cordoba.

#### **Board Response & Questions:**

*Excellent. Very strong.*

*How large is the farm? Do they only cultivate olives?*

The Company owns 56 hectares and leases another 110 hectares, solely for the cultivation of organic olives. On adjacent land of 80 hectares, the company cultivates organic almonds and houses their organically raised sheep.

### **Local Ownership**

*The producing company is privately or worker-owned with a majority of the owners actively participating in the company.*

The company is set up as a family co-operative in which all partners must work in the company and ownership is shared equally. This is truly a family farm, with Tránsito Habas Sánchez and Jesús Fernández de Castro and their daughter Tránsito Fernández Habas as the owners, farmhands, production crew, and any other role needed to get the job done. All owners are originally from Pozoblanco.

### **Board Response & Questions:**

*Excellent. Very strong.*

*Percentage of employees is quite small. How does this enable them to give job priority to women who are at risk within the local community?*

For all available jobs, both permanent and seasonal, the company gives preference to women. There are more opportunities for work during the harvest seasons.

### **Social Responsibility**

*The company's social and financial practices and policies are designed to ensure maximum benefit to the company's employees and to the local community and economy.*

The company was founded on the belief that protecting the land and working within and for community is the only sustainable and rational way to exist in the world. In all aspects of the company, the employees, the community, and the environment are top priority.

*Employees:* Besides the owners, there are two employees, both from the local community. One manages the packing process and the other is dedicated to sales. The company structure does not allow there to be more employees than 1/3 the number of partners. The owners are experienced farmers and thus the full process from cultivation to pressing and bottling is done in house. All employees are paid a living wage that is 30% higher than the national standard, and schedules are flexible. The structure of the co-op puts aside 5% of the profits for training and development courses, which are available to everyone in the company.

*Community:* The co-op is a leader in Spain in organic agriculture and ranching. They have opened up their farm and their schedules to train others in this field. They work with University and High School students, consumer associations, and other farmers to teach them their techniques. They invest in research and development to perfect the ways in which they work the land to find the most efficient and effective farming and animal husbandry methods - working with homeopathy, experimenting with vegetation cover and biodynamic agriculture, and other symbiotic relationships. The owners work with at risk women in Pozoblanco, and always give job preference women from their community.

### Board Response & Questions:

*Excellent. Impressive.*

*Limited opportunities because the business is small. Nevertheless, it seems that they are very interested in sharing their farm as a model in the region and throughout the country so impact goes beyond what they do directly.*

*The report mentions job preference to local women - is this for harvesting of the olives? Are there seasonal workers as well as the full time workers?*

The company has only a few full time jobs, which are filled by women. During the harvest, there are more job opportunities, and these are offered to local families, with an emphasis on employing women.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

*The company's environmental practices and policies are designed to minimize environmental impact through the elimination of chemicals and waste, and the reduction of resource use.*

Olivar de la Luna is a leader in Spain in organic agriculture. They re-established the family farm in the early 80's, and lived off the grid for many years. Today they rely on solar power for much of their electricity needs

*Cultivation:* All of the olive trees from the Olivar farm are cultivated according to organic agricultural guidelines. The company specifically focuses on energy efficiency, biodiversity, and the recycling of all wastes, such as using the by-products as natural fertilizer. The land between the trees is grazed by organic sheep as a natural way to reduce vegetation. Pulses are also grown around the trees to avoid erosion on the steep slopes of this mountainous farmland.

*Production & Facility Management:* The production of the olives on the Olivar de la Luna farm is done through a mix of old world know-how and modern technology. The trees are cultivated without irrigation and much of the harvest is done by hand. The majority of the electricity comes from solar power, with only a back up generator used during the heaviest times of production. The facility is HACCP certified. It also has the voluntary "Quality Guarantee" certification from the Andalucian government. It has also received the "Territorial Quality" certification that ensures quality at the social, environmental and product levels. The final product is organic certified by the European Union and the USDA.

*Packaging:* The Olivar products use no plastics and the inks are water-based. The glass packaging is made from recycled glass, and all cardboard, marketing and admin materials use recycled paper.

### Board Response & Questions:

*Excellent. Impressive.*

### **Overall Board Assessment**

*The perfect example of a Rooted Foods company.*

*Excellent all around, especially environmental practices.*

*Social impact is limited in scope because of the small size of company, but great model.*

*Now we know why we like this product so much.*