



Part of our continuing coverage of the 2020 NYIOOC World Olive Oil Competition.

"Delighted," "thrilled" and "rapt" were some expressions New Zealand's producers used in response to earning seven Gold Awards at the [2020 NYIOOC World Olive Oil Competition](#).

The country's total was three more than they won at the 2019 edition of the competition. New Zealanders won six more Golds this time around.

The New Zealand industry is boutique by nature and while it may not have the volume production, this is more than compensated in the outstanding quality.

- Gayle Sheridan, executive officer of Olives New Zealand

This year's NYIOOC entries were [judged remotely](#) as a result of travel restrictions due to the global [COVID-19 crisis](#).

[Olives New Zealand](#) executive officer Gayle Sheridan described this year as an outstanding one for New Zealand, which has won Gold Awards at the competition every year since 2016.

"Olives New Zealand extends its congratulations to the New Zealand winners and to all the other winners," Sheridan said.

"Olives New Zealand sent our five top winning gold medal oils from the 2019 New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards to New York, and [they all won Gold](#)," she added, in reference to the brands carried by Olives New Zealand: Woodside Bay, Kakariki, Kapiti, Old French Road and [Olea Estate](#) brands.

"These Gold Award-winning oils are representative of the wider New Zealand industry," Sheridan said. "The New Zealand olive industry is a relatively young industry on an international scale, with most of our plantings being in 1999 to 2001."

"According to the Olives New Zealand grove census, there are 350,000 olive trees planted with the majority of groves having less than 1,000 trees," she added. "Therefore, the New Zealand industry is boutique by nature and while it may not have the volume production, this is more than compensated in the outstanding quality."

John Goodwin who owns [Woodside Bay](#), with a small grove of 200 olive trees, on Waiheke Island with his wife, Angela, said they were 'delighted to be honored with this award' for their medium blend.

He added they were very excited when Olives New Zealand told them their oil was being entered to the NYIOOC.

'Rather naively, we had assumed that the contest would not be able to proceed because of COVID-19, so it was just amazing when we received a text in the middle of the night, to tell us that our oil had won a Gold Award on the world stage,' he said.

'As a romantic,' Angela Goodwin said, "I will tell you that our olives succeed because they are tended with love. As a horticulturist, John will credit our terroir, maritime climate and husbandry, which keep our trees disease-free and therefore spray-free."

"We think the standard of New Zealand's olive oils has just been getting better and better as the artisanal nature of the product has developed," she added. "And our buyers have become increasingly discerning as to the nature of the oil they are buying."

New Zealand's minister of agriculture, Damien O'Connor, congratulated the winners "who should all be very proud of this huge achievement."

"New Zealand's olive oil industry is small and relatively new," O'Connor said. "I'm proud to see our producers punching above their weight by creating high-quality products that compete on the world stage."

O'Connor said these seven awards "are testament to their hard work, focus on sustainable production and great understanding of growing exceptional olives in New Zealand conditions."

He said the government is proud to partner with their olive industry through the Sustainable Food & Fiber Futures fund to boost olive production through sustainable techniques.

"This work has already had considerable success," O'Connor said. "I am excited for the future of New Zealand's olive industry and broader food and fiber sector as we look to our next wave of innovation and transformation. Even though olives are relatively new for New Zealand, we can see a vibrant industry developing."