



THE OLIVE OIL PEOPLE

**How a Collective of Family Olive Growers Achieved
21st Century Performance Goals**





Pompeian Makes Certified Sustainably Grown® the Cornerstone of Its Olive Production

One of the world's leading suppliers of olive oil, Pompeian is a farmer-owned collective of more than 75,000 farmers in Spain and California and is partnered with thousands more farmers around the world, including Italy, Greece, Portugal, Morocco, Chile, Argentina, and Tunisia. Pompeian recognized that to maintain its leadership in the market and distinguish its brand, it would need to work hand in hand with the families who have tended the land for centuries and embark on a mission to bring traditional olive oil production into the 21st century. At the same time, Pompeian set out to elevate the olive oil industry to achieve new standards of accountability, transparency, and sustainability that avoid any hint of greenwashing.

The Problem

Moving toward a more sustainable future for olive oil presented a broad set of challenges. Most farms within the Pompeian collective are grower-owned, including Pompeian's Sunrise* Olive Ranch located in California, the first of Pompeian's farms to be certified. Some are co-ops that contain hundreds of individually-owned, traditional farms. Without the efficiencies of scale that large, industrial farms can leverage, family farms needed extra support from Pompeian to remain competitive in the global market.



Many growers also face unique regional and financial challenges that can make change difficult to achieve. Some Pompeian collective farmers, for example, in South America and the Mediterranean basin, have found it difficult to maintain traditional growing methodologies, to manage rapidly changing climates and competing government regulations, and in some areas, to operate without the support of sufficient public services such as waste management and recycling services, all while focusing on the goal of increasing crop yields.

As a corporate entity, Pompeian recognized these and other farm-specific challenges and committed not only to addressing them, but also to considering advances in science and business practices that could improve yields, soil quality, worker conditions, community benefits, and overall farm health.

* Sunrise Olive Ranch, Pompeian's U.S. farm, served as a pilot program for all farm certifications, which helped additional farms gain certification.

Solutions Provided

After a comprehensive review of the many food and agriculture sustainability standards on the market — and realizing that the olive oil industry didn't have its own set of sustainability standards — Pompeian selected SCS Global Services and its Certified Sustainably Grown program to help revitalize Pompeian's growing culture and farm-level sustainability practices. Led by an all-women team, Pompeian supported farmers at every turn to ensure that they understood and could meet the requirements of the Sustainably Grown Standard by providing farmers with pre-audits, training and record keeping support, as well as addressing the specific needs of their respective growing regions. This support enabled growers to embrace an array of sustainability improvements ranging from soil conservation and water management to cover crop planting — changes designed and implemented under the Sustainably Grown® standard. Before too long, farmers celebrated substantial increases in grove productivity, increased biodiversity, more efficient operations,

improved use of resources, and, in some cases, workers experienced financial bonuses for the first time based on farm success. Pompeian then financed the third-party certification audits by SCS Global Services to have these achievements independently evaluated and verified.



“Led by an all-women team, Sunrise Olive Ranch is proud to be the first Pompeian farm to be Certified Sustainably Grown. We’re proud our certification will pave the way for other farms, and hopefully, other olive oil companies, to achieve this prestigious certification.”

– Lorena Antoun,
*Quality and Sustainability Manager
at Sunrise Olive Ranch*



"When we tell other olive growers that we are certified with Sustainably Grown, they are always so impressed because the standard is so rigorous. It's prestigious. So each time one of our farms achieves this certification we consider it to be the best way for us to demonstrate our excellence and commitment."

– Paula Lopes

Vice President of Quality, R&D and Environment, Pompeian

Key Outcomes

- Pompeian's relationships with farmers, including trust and morale, grew stronger.
- Growers benefitted in myriad ways from their efforts to enact sustainable agriculture practices.
- Growers learned and implemented soil conservation and water management practices as well as cover crop planting to create improved growing conditions.
- Implementing the Sustainably Grown standard helped improve the health of olive trees.
- More efficient use of resources: targeted deployment resulted in reduced usage of and requirement for fertilizers.
- Flourishing biodiversity: the holistic, nature-based focus of the Sustainably Grown standard encouraged farmers to build owl houses, attract wild pollinators, and prune trees to create habitat for wildlife.
- Demonstrable commitment to Sustainably Grown excellence helped Pompeian advance its reputation as a global leader in olive oil production.
- Pompeian is working toward having 100% of its extra virgin oil suppliers certified as Sustainably Grown by 2028, with olive growing sites in Portugal, Turkey, and Tunisia next in line.
- Pompeian also plans to have additional product lines certified to the Sustainably Grown standard.



"We wish to see SCS Global Services Sustainably Grown become the standard for the entire olive oil industry. It has brought our farmers and our farms so much goodness. Sustainably Grown offers a level of satisfaction and sustainability that is unmatched — it's the best for the groves, the olives, and the people. Especially for the farmers and their families."



– Teresa Garcia López
*Director of Sustainability and Environment,
Pompeian*



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