

# SOL d'ORO

INTERNATIONAL EVOO AWARDS

## XXIV INTERNATIONAL EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL COMPETITION

Verona 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2026

### REGULATIONS

#### Article 1) Introduction

Within the scope of events organized during SOL EXPO, scheduled in Verona 1-3 March 2026, Veronafiere S.p.A. is delighted to announce and organize the XXIV International SOL D'ORO NORTHERN HEMISPHERE Competition 2026 (Verona 18-24 February 2026) with these purposes:

- highlight the finest olive oil products and making them known among national and international consumers and operators
- enhance typical extra virgin olive oils and their many varieties, especially in relation to their geographical origin
- stimulate and reward the efforts of companies that focus on continuous improvements in product quality

#### Article 2) Admission criteria

The International Sol d'Oro Northern Hemisphere 2026 Competition is open to all extra virgin olive oils produced and marketed by the following subjects:

- agricultural companies (individual or associated) producing olives and relative olive oil at an oil mill;
- olive mills producing oil using olives purchased or owned by the mill itself.

These companies or mills must submit, within the indicated deadlines, a regular application to participate on condition that they produce a minimum quantity of 1,500 litres (1,000 litres for the PDO category), or equivalent production, for each oil submitted to the competition.

#### Article 3) Competition Categories

The extra virgin olive oils presented are divided into four categories: Extra virgin - PDO - Single Variety - Organic.

The Extra Virgin Olive Oil category in turn will be divided into:

- Delicate fruit olive oils;
- Medium fruit olive oils;
- Intense fruit olive oils.

Each company can take part in the Competition in all four categories listed above, with up to four different labels (one for each category) as specified in the Application Form.

For the Extra Virgin category, the subdivision according to fruitiness will be made by the Jury of the Competition.

For the Single Variety category, the label must include the name of olive variety.

For the PDO category, only oils from single or associated farms and oil mills falling within the characteristics listed in Article 2.

**Article 4) To raise awareness even among small extra virgin olive oil producers** (who have a maximum production of 2000 litres of oil per year) and offer them an assessment of the quality level achieved, there is a special competition category named "**Absolute Beginners**" (AB).

In this category small producers, falling within the characteristics of Article 2, can participate by sending only one sample of oil that has been produced by them with a minimum quantity of 500 liters and a maximum quantity of 1,499 liters.

Oils entered in the Extra Virgin Absolute Beginners category will participate in the Extra virgin category without distinction of fruity intensity, and the first three classified obtaining from the International Jury an assessment equal to or higher than 70/90, calculated as the average scores listed by jurors on their competition tasting cards, will respectively be awarded with:

- Gold Plaque Absolute Beginners 1st place
- Silver Plaque Absolute Beginners 2nd place
- Bronze Plaque Absolute Beginners 3rd place.

In addition, the next five classified olive oils will receive an Absolute Beginners Special Mention diploma.

The company presenting the entry must follow the dispositions of Articles 5, 6 (six bottles of a single sample oil) and 7.

**4a) By way of acknowledging the importance of the olive oil market held by large oil producing companies, sales and bottling companies, cooperatives and producer organizations**, whatever their legal status, and thereby offer an opportunity for competition among peers concerning the quality of the extra virgin olive oil they market, a **special contest category has been instituted, called Big Producers (BP)**. Italian and international companies that market extra virgin olive oils for **total volumes of more than 1,000,000 litres oil or total turnover of more than 50 million euros** can enter their products in this category.

Big Producers also include micro, small or medium enterprises which, regardless of production volume and legal status, are owned, controlled or connected directly or indirectly (through natural persons, trustees or trusts, including trade union agreements or shareholders) with the large, companies, cooperatives or producer organizations mentioned above.

Companies entering the **Big Producers** category can present a maximum of four samples (one for each competition category) of 100% extra virgin olive oil originating from the country where they have their registered offices. Blends or mixtures of extra virgin olive oils from different countries are not permitted. Together with the samples, the company **MUST** also provide a **unique and distinctive batch number** to identify the product being assessed by the Sol d'Oro Jury.

Selections will take place in the same manner as for the other competition categories: the Big Producers oil olive award it shall refer exclusively to said unique and distinctive batch and not to the brand or the output of the entire company.

Inasmuch, the company is not allowed to advertise, promote or communicate, by any means, the prize awarded separately from the batch number if of the award-winning product. It is also forbidden, even through association, advertising, promotion or communication of the award, to make reference to company or its brands as a whole (including any brand associated with the batch entered for the competition).

These olive oils will be entered in the **Extra Virgin Big Producers** category, without distinction as regards fruit intensity, and the first place winners in each category, earning an assessment from the International Jury equal to or higher than 70/90, calculated as the average scores listed by jurors on their competition tasting cards, will respectively be awarded with:

- Big Producers Gold Plaque – Extra Virgin category
- Big Producers Gold Plaque – Organic category
- Big Producers Gold Plaque – Single variety category
- Big Producers Gold Plaque – PDO category

In addition, the following five olive oils classified will receive a Big Producers Special Mention Diploma.

**PLEASE NOTE: If the oils participating in the four categories (Extra Virgin, Organic, Monovarietal and DOP) do not reach the minimum number of 10 samples for each category, the oils submitted will all be included in the Extra Virgin category only and the participating company will have to follow the instructions in articles 5, 6 and 7.**

#### Article 5) Registration

By 16 February 2026, the Company must register on the website ([solexpo.com](http://solexpo.com)) and upload the following documents in the Business Portal - Reserved Area of Veronafiere or send via email ([info@soldorointernational.com](mailto:info@soldorointernational.com)):

**4a)** Certificates of analysis of the samples of olive oil entered, indicating at least the free oleic acidity and the peroxide number; the certificates must clearly indicate the name of the company.

**4b)** PDO category: the sample must be accompanied by the documentation issued by the Certifying Body, and certified for the 2025/2026 oil campaign, testifying to certification of the uniform batch of at least 1,000 litres.

**Article 6) Receipt of samples and shipment**

a) Companies must send - **by 16 February 2026** - a maximum of four different types of extra virgin olive oil (Article 3), packaged and labelled in **n° 6 bottles (for each sample entered)** having a capacity of 0.50 litres (maximum 24 bottles per company with four different extra virgin olive oils) or the equivalent quantity of oil in containers involving other formats (maximum 1 liter containers).

b) **The choice of courier is at the discretion of companies entering the competition and the shipping address is:**

**Veronafiere - International Sol d'Oro Northern Hemisphere Competition 2026 - Viale del Lavoro 8, 37135 Verona (Italia) - attn. Antonella Capriotti.**

**PLEASE NOTE: For non-EU countries it is highly recommended to use UPS courier with destination Bergamo.**

c) The Organisers decline any and every responsibility for late arrival of samples compared to the required date, total or partial loss of samples during transport, chemical-physical and sensory alterations of the samples caused by thermal ranges, breakages or other deterioration caused during transport.

Expenses for shipment, customs clearance and delivery to destination: **Veronafiere - International Sol d'Oro Northern Hemisphere Competition 2025 - Viale del Lavoro 8, 37135 Verona (Italia)**, are the responsibility of the presenting companies. These costs must be paid directly to the shipping agent. Samples shipped carriage paid will be rejected and not returned. Samples that do not meet the regulations and judged not to conform with the groups and characteristics envisaged by the Competition as governed by Article 5 above will be automatically excluded from the Competition. this will not entitle the Company to a refund of the registration fee paid, nor to the return of such samples.

**Article 7) Registration fee and payment**

€150 + VAT for each registered sample.

N.B: The registration fee is mandatory: at the end of the competition, exhibitors at SOL EXPO will receive a full refund of the registration fee for the first sample. Payments must be made with a clear indication of the paying Customer and the Competition (International Sol d'Oro Northern Hemisphere Competition 2026) to which the payment refers, by means of:

1) Bank transfer to:

Banco BPM Ag. Cassa Mercato Verona IBAN: IT37K 05034 11751 0000 0012 4030  
SWIFT/BIC: BAPPIT 21011

2) Credit card

Any banking expenses shall be entirely born by the competition entrant. Olive oils entered by companies which have not paid the registration fee will not be admitted to the Competition.

*No payment is valid if it is not made out directly to Veronafiere S.p.A.*

**Article 8) Reception, anonymous ID and assessment process**

From the reception to the presentation of the samples to the Jury, it is the responsibility of Veronafiere S.p.A. to store the samples meticulously and appropriately to ensure their integrity.

It will be the responsibility of a lawyer appointed by Veronafiere S.p.A. to:

- anonymize the received extra virgin olive oil samples with a secret code;
- ensure the formal aspects and operational procedures;
- oversee the Jury's operations, which will always be conducted in blind tasting;
- draft the report with the rankings.

**Article 9) The Jury** comprises experts from various panels and international experts chosen and appointed by the Technical Manager-Panel Leader of the Competition.

The assessment method is detailed on specific data cards developed by the Technical Manager-Panel Leader of the International Sol d'Oro Northern Hemisphere 2025 Competition.

The final score of every sample is the arithmetic average of the scores given in the score table envisaged by the method adopted. The Jury's decisions are final. For reasons of confidentiality as regards participating companies, only the list of extra virgin olive oils receiving awards will be notified but not the names of participating companies, nor the score assigned to individual samples, nor the scorecards of the tasting panel. Sensory assessment of the oils focuses exclusively on the conduction of the Sol d'Oro competition.

The first three extra virgin olive oils obtaining the best score in each of the four categories will respectively be awarded:

- Sol d'Oro - Gold Medal - 1st Prize;
- Sol d'Argento - Silver Medal - 2nd Prize;
- Sol di Bronzo - Bronze Medal - 3rd Prize.

In the Extra Virgin Olive Oil category, since it is divided in turn into three sections on the basis of fruit characteristics, Sol d'Oro, Sol d'Argento and Sol di Bronzo (Gold, Silver and Bronze) awards will be made in each of the three sections.

In each of the four categories, Special Mention diplomas will also be awarded to the top 12 samples of extra virgin olive oil (and in each of the three sections for the Extra Virgin category) that achieving a tasting score of at least 70/90 as listed in the Competition tasting cards.

**Article 9a) On Tuesday 24 February 2026, during a live Facebook event organised by Veronafiere will be announced the list of all the finalists for each category of the Competition**

The diplomas will be awarded to all winning companies (including Special Mentions) during the SOL EXPO exhibition **on Sunday, March 1, 2026**. The presentation of trophies and plaques will take place during the Evo Gala Dinner, a dinner in honor of the winners.

Prizes and diplomas not collected during SOL EXPO will remain available for the winning companies at Veronafiere S.p.A., where they can be picked up at any time throughout the year.

**Article 10)** To enhance the companies participating in the Competition with multiple high-quality samples, Veronafiere S.p.A. establishes the **SOL D'ORO Challenge 2026** award aimed at companies belonging to the SME category. This award will be granted to the company that obtains the highest score with the sum of the oils presented in the competition, according to the following evaluation:

Sol d'Oro - Gold Medal 10 points Sol d'Argento - Silver medal 7 points

Sol di Bronzo - Bronze medal 5 points Special Mention 3 points

Oil presented but not winner: 1 point

The winning company of the Challenge will participate as an exhibitor of SOL2EXPO 2027 free of charge.

**Article 11)** Veronafiere S.p.A. in order to promote the Competition and highlight award-winning oils, reserves the right to:

- publish the **Sensory cards of award-winning olive oils**; a collection of the competition's award-winning oils distributed to buyers and delegates of Veronafiere S.p.A.
- present the winning oils of the Sol d'Oro, Sol d'Argento, Sol di Bronzo awards (Gold, Silver and Bronze), as well as the Absolute Beginners and Big Producers Plaques at the Evo Bar both at SOL EXPO (March 1-3, 2026) and at Vinitaly (April 12-15, 2026).
- organize two tastings of award-winning oils in the EVO OIL Tasting area during SOL EXPO (1-3 March 2026)
- organize a Walk Around Tasting of the winning oils Sol d'Oro, Sol d'Argento and Sol di Bronzo (Gold, Silver and Bronze) present at the event, for a selection of international operators;
- organize the EVO Gala Dinner, a dinner in honor of the winning oils the Sol d'Oro, Sol d'Argento and Sol di Bronzo (Gold, Silver and Bronze), as well as the Plaques of the Absolute Beginners and Big Producers categories, dedicated to a delegation of foreign evo oil operators;
- present the winners of the Sol d'Oro, Sol d'Argento and Sol di Bronzo medals (Gold, Silver and Bronze) during the international events which will be scheduled in due course;
- include award-winning oils in a list shared with the Italian and international press as well as on the event website;

In relation to the foregoing promotional activities, producers of olive oils earning Competition Medals and Special Mentions shall deliver 6 bottles of the award-winning olive oils.

**Article 12)** Veronafiere S.p.A. grants award-winning Companies (Medals and Special Mentions) authorization to print a corresponding number of labels or stickers in order to affix them to the bottles containing the award-winning olive oil, bearing the words "Sol d'Oro International competition Northern Hemisphere 2026" with different colours and wording depending on the award and in accordance with the dimensions and colours supplied by Veronafiere S.p.A. The Company will receive the pertinent sticker by e-mail within 30 days from the date the award is assigned.

The number of labels or stickers must match the number of bottles of olive oil earning an award in the Competition based on the quantity declared in the application to take part in the Competition itself: fraudulent use of labels or stickers on oils that did not win awards is strictly forbidden.

The cost of printing labels and stickers shall be borne by the company.

**Article 13)** Veronafiere S.p.A. reserves the right to modify these regulations at any time and whenever necessary. The Courts of Verona shall be the competent place of jurisdiction for any controversy.

**SOL EXPO**  
THE OLIVE & OIL TRADE SHOW