A bank of Catalan olive varieties with more than 50 references

Since 1988, the Catalan Generalitat's Institute for Research and Agro-Food Technologies (IRTA) **has been working on the conservation of the genetic resources of the Catalan olive grove, consolidating, up today, a collection that registers more than 50 varieties and occupies a Surface of 0.6 ha. in its** center of Mas de Bover, **in Constantí (Tarragona).**

Through this Bank of Catalan olive varieties is intended to conserve the genetic resources of the Catalan olive grove outside their natural habitat, while studying to evaluate in the same conditions of cultivation the genetic variability and the characters of agronomic and technological interest (oil) of autochthonous varieties, together with morphological and molecular characterization.

> Currently, the Germplasm Bank of the Catalan olive grove includes a total of 50 genotypes, from the surveys carried out in Catalonia

This initiative is part of the Plan of Action for Cultivated Biodiversity of the Department of Agriculture of the Generalitat, *which aims to contribute to the conservation of traditional varieties*, a very important issue given its contribution to the increase of cultivated biodiversity, a Guarantee of the agricultural system.

Local varieties are a source of plant genetic resources that have to be preserved, since they are the biological basis of food production and food security, as well as their contribution to the economic and social development of the territory. The public resources devoted to its conservation are key to addressing the new challenges of population growth and changes in the environment. The loss of these plant genetic resources would be a limitation of the capacity to respond to new needs and, therefore, it is necessary to contribute for their conservation.

The plan of action on cultivated biodiversity of the olive tree in Catalonia contemplates:

• Local listing of olive trees (Olea europaea L.) of woody plants preserved in situ

• List of local varieties of olive woody plants (Olea europaea L.) preserved ex situ in the Center of Mas de Bover. From the catalog of local olive varieties of agricultural interest in Catalonia, it is worth mentioning:
? 'Becarut'
? 'Carrasquenya'
? 'Panisello'
? 'Plans'
? 'Tiuranenca'

Source: IRTA