



Conservation of Palestinian olive trees varieties by a non-profit, community driven project

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Summary	Zeyt Falasteen is a non-profit initiative to conserve and cultivate Palestinian-variety olive trees in Europe. The project aims to build an olive oil brand rooted in hope, heritage and identity.											
Key details	- 100% non-profit project (legal entity planned as <i>gUG</i> in Germany to facilitate European fundraising) - Requesting access to scion materials of Nabali and Souri varieties - Community driven and volunteer supported - Crowdfunding centered on a positive Palestinian story with strong grassroots interest across Europe.											
Motivation	As Palestinians in the diaspora, we want to create a story rooted in hope, continuity and resilience. Zeyt Falasteen creates this narrative by giving Palestinian olive tree varieties new roots in Europe. The unique olive oil these trees produce has been woven into the cultural identity of Palestine for centuries. This project seeks not only to preserve trees, but to protect the stories and flavors they represent, and share its rich history with people across Europe											
Scope & Request	We seek collaboration with the World Olive Germplasm Bank in Córdoba to access scion material from the Nabali and Souri Palestinian olive tree varieties. Our plan is to partner with local nurseries to graft this material onto local EU certified rootstock and cultivate an initial pilot batch under full traceability and phytosanitary compliance. If successful, we would establish a heritage grove in Andalucia to continue the cultivation process and document the trees’ adaption, growth and oil characteristics. The long term vision is to produce a small batch, heritage olive oil brand, not for profit but as an expression of preservation, peace and cultural continuity.											
Varieties	Palestine’s olive heritage centres on two ancient varieties: Nabali and Souri (literally “Syrian”). Older Nabali strains are also known as Rumi (“Roman”), linking them to some of the oldest olive lineages in the Mediterranean. <table><tr><td>(source)</td><td>Av. fruit weight in grams</td><td>% kernel to fruit weight</td><td>% pulp to fruit weight</td><td>% oil to fruit pulp weight</td><td>% water to fruit pulp weight</td></tr></table>						(source)	Av. fruit weight in grams	% kernel to fruit weight	% pulp to fruit weight	% oil to fruit pulp weight	% water to fruit pulp weight
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Cultural impact	Beyond conservation, Zeyt Falasteen aims to share the story of Palestinians as stewards of their culture heritage and its trees. It will foster intercultural dialogue through the shared symbolism of the olive tree; a sacred icon in Christianity, Islam, and Judaism alike. In collaboration with the University of Córdoba and the Olive Tree Museum, we hope to create an exhibition that traces the olive’s journey from Palestine to Andalusia, connecting cultures through resilience and peace.												
People	Karim Beltaji (Project lead): Entrepreneur with 15 years of experience building software companies and fundraising. Palestinian background, living in Germany. Dana Beltaji (Comms): Journalist with 10 years of experience. Previous editor at the Associated Press Climate team. Palestinian background, living in the UK. Laila Higazi (Agriculture lead): Environmental biologist with patrimonial expertise on vineyards in Belgium. Current post graduate student at the University of Córdoba, Olive cultivation and Elaiotechnology program. Palestinian background. Shane Murphy (Tech lead): Software Engineer with 15 years of experience. Irish background, living in Berlin.												
Funding	The project will be funded primarily through crowdfunding. All proceeds will directly support non-profit conservation and educational initiatives, with full transparency shared on the project website. Given the broad awareness of the Palestinian cause and early community feedback, we anticipate strong grassroots participation. Crowdfunding supporters will receive early olive oil batches and special recognition at the final grove site.												
Timeline	<table><tr><td>Foundation</td><td>Formalize collaboration, secure scion material, establish nursery partnership.</td><td>Year 0</td></tr><tr><td>Propagation</td><td>Grafting and initial cultivation of pilot trees.</td><td>Year 1</td></tr><tr><td>Heritage Grove</td><td>Establish first grove in southern Europe, begin monitoring and documentation.</td><td>Year 2-5</td></tr><tr><td>Legacy & outreach</td><td>Launch heritage olive oil batches, museum exhibition, and educational programs.</td><td>Year 6-10</td></tr></table>	Foundation	Formalize collaboration, secure scion material, establish nursery partnership.	Year 0	Propagation	Grafting and initial cultivation of pilot trees.	Year 1	Heritage Grove	Establish first grove in southern Europe, begin monitoring and documentation.	Year 2-5	Legacy & outreach	Launch heritage olive oil batches, museum exhibition, and educational programs.	Year 6-10
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