

# Introduction to Olive Oil Sensory Assessment

NY, May 2025

**NYIOOC**  
THE NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL  
OLIVE OIL COMPETITION

# **20 years ago...**

## **Somewhere in Sicily**

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# WHY DO WE TASTE?



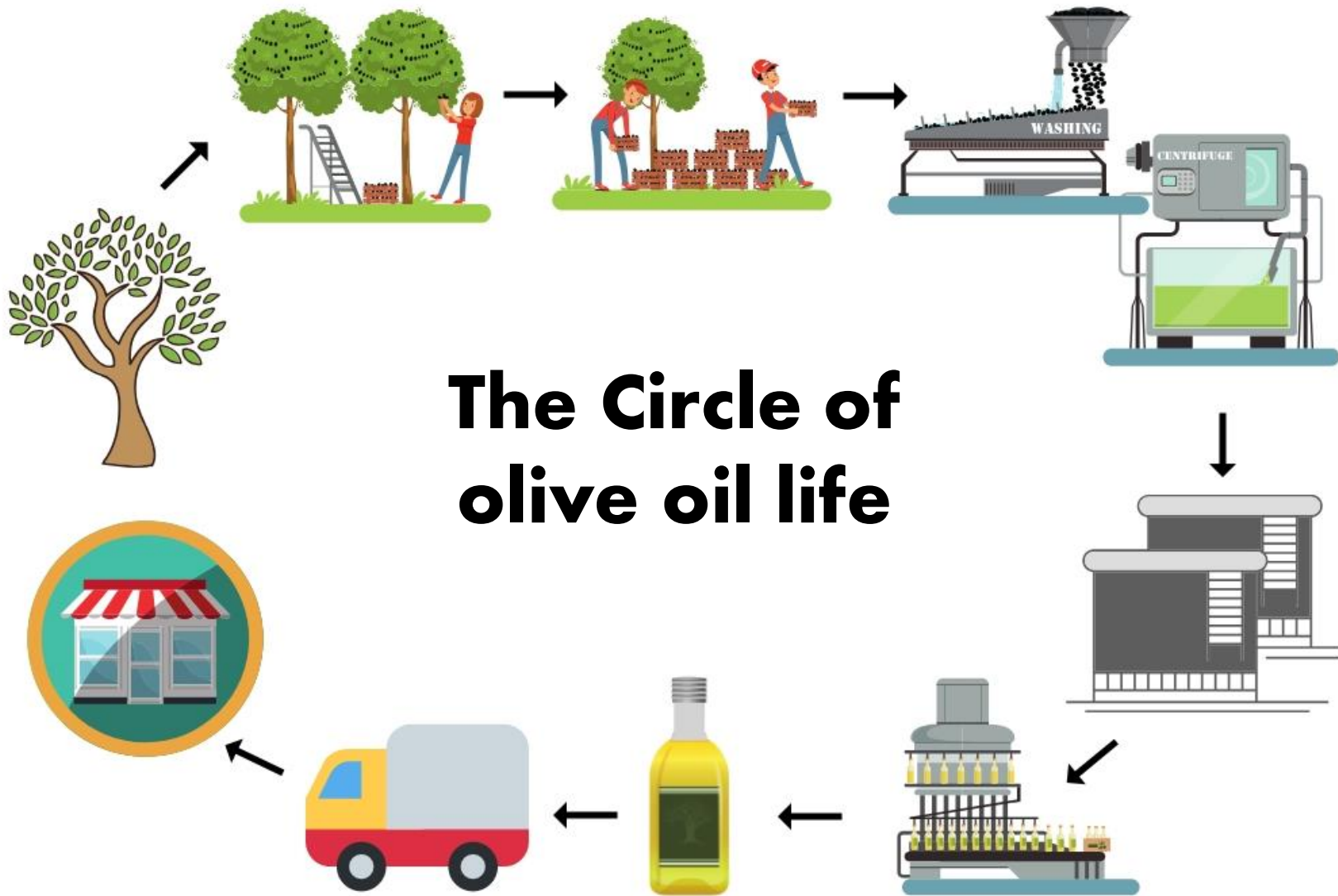


# Confussion Disinformation Fraud

**But the truth is that we taste by mandate of an IOC regulation, which includes tasting as a fundamental requirement for the classification of virgin olive oil..**

# I hope all of you had this experience at least once...





**Terroir**



**Cultivar**



**Moment and  
type of  
harvest**



**Maturation  
level**



**Olives storage  
and time  
between process**



**Extraction  
process**



**We learn a new language:  
The olive oil “speaks”  
through sensory  
assessment**

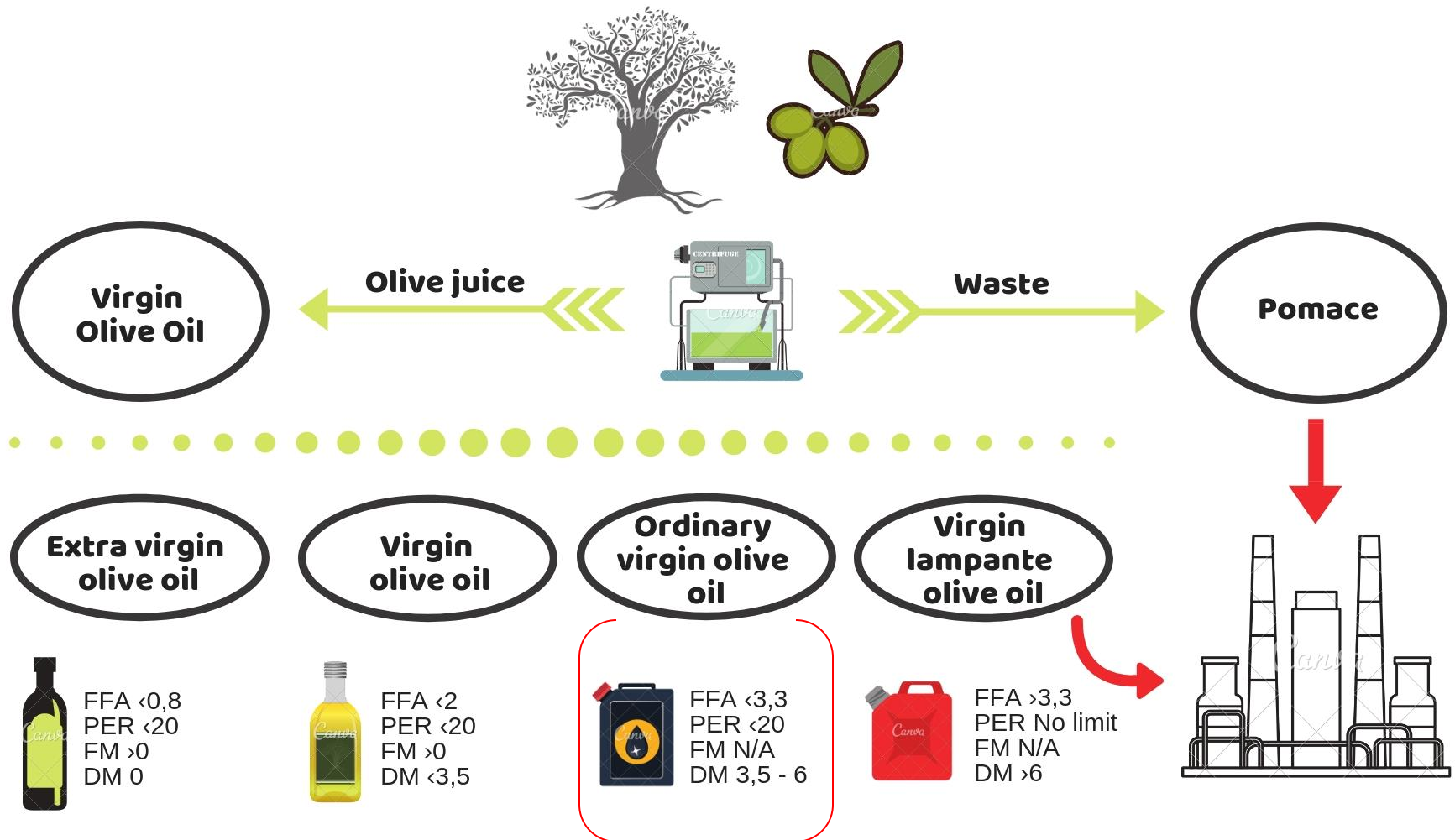
**Storage  
conditions**



**Agronomical  
practices**



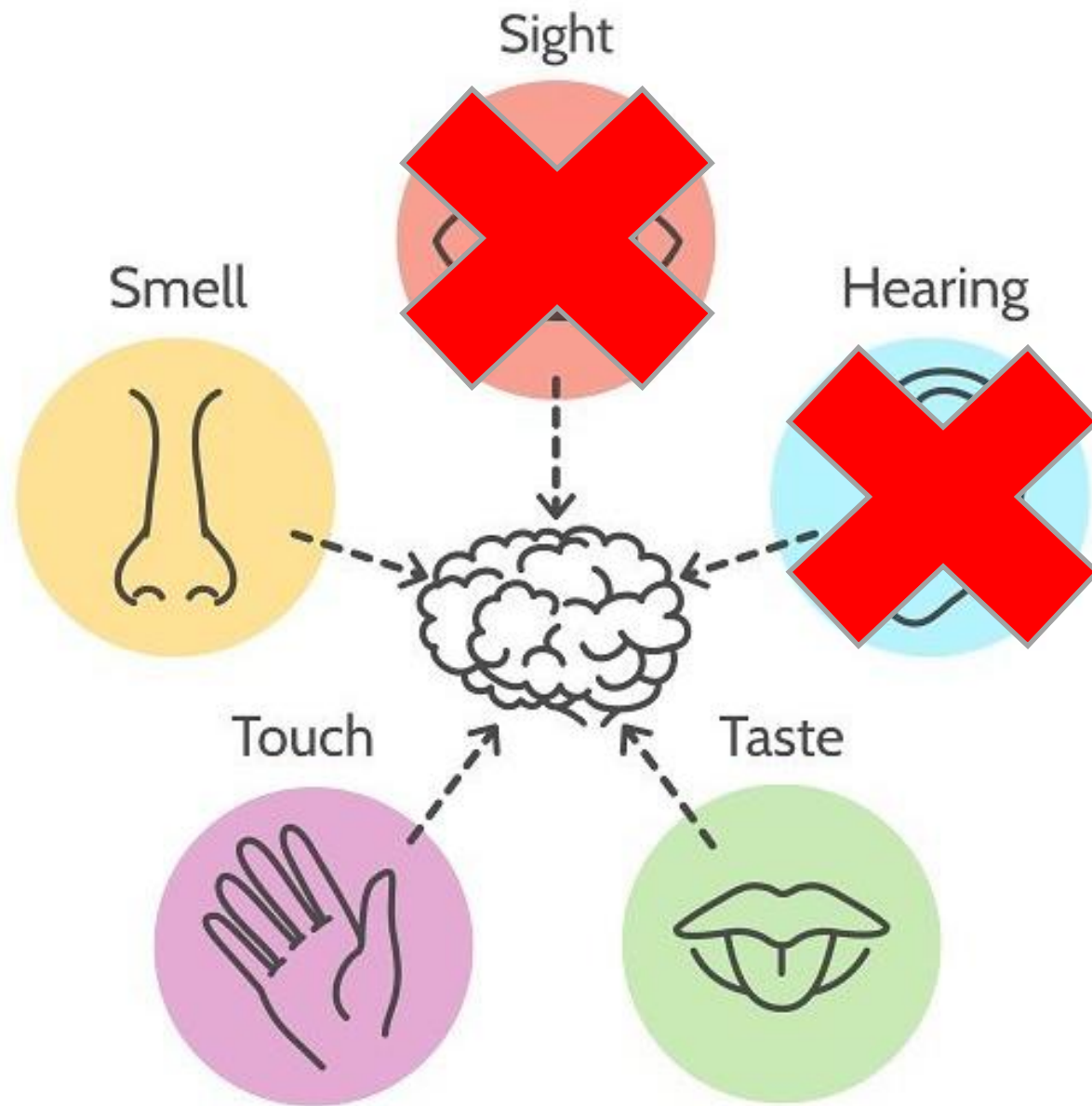
# IOC standard talks about **fruitiness** and **defects**



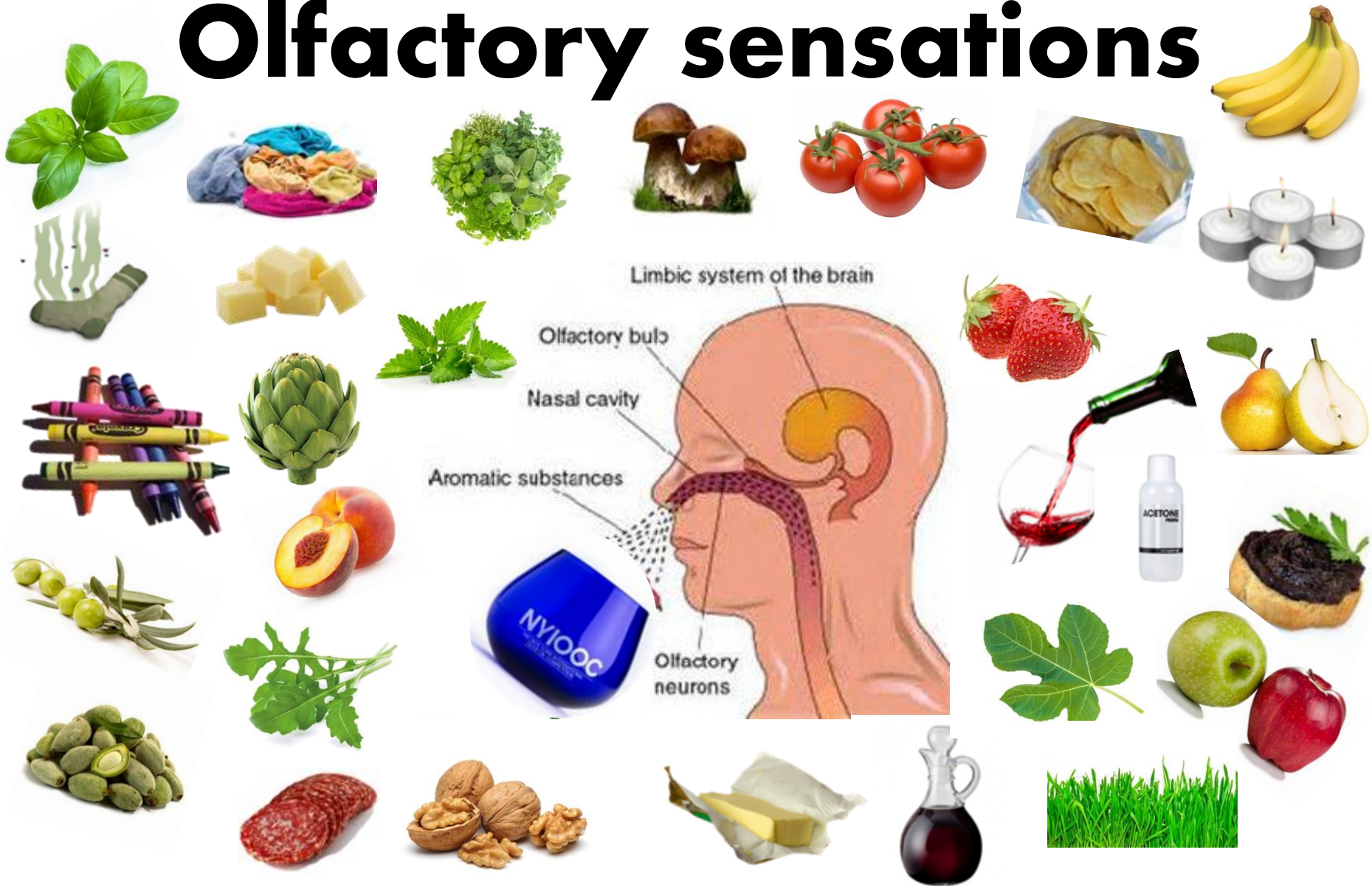
# So... & what is the first thing you should do with olive oil?



## A blue glass trophy cup with a silver rim. The cup features the text 'NYIOOC' in large white letters, with 'THE NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL OLIVE OIL COMPETITION' written in smaller white letters below it.



# Olfactory sensations



# Gustatory sensations

UMAMI



**Tomato**

SOUR



**Lemon**

**Don't confuse  
with the  
chemical acidity**

SWEET



**Sugar**

**We have a  
different kind  
of sweet**

BITTER



**Coffee**

SALTY



**Salt**

# Tactile sensations



## Pungency

It's not **gustatory**, it's sensed via chemesthesis, the sensitivity of the skin and mucous membranes to certain substances. **This is why we get this burnt in the throat.**



**WE USE A SPECIFIC METHOD  
and that makes all the difference**



# Taster v/s Tasting Panel

- **Subjective**
- **It allows you to design commercial strategies, pairings, action plans during the harvest...**
- **It gives us clues about the quality**

- **Objective**
- **Protects the consumer from fraud and lies**
- **Uses statistics as a differentiator – has legitimacy**



**Verify  
presence  
or absence of  
defects**

**Determinates DOP**

**Describe  
intensity  
of sensations**

## **OUR WORK**

**(private, research, official)**

**Show variants  
in the  
sensory profile  
(cultivar, OD,  
shelf life...)**

**Find special  
characteristics  
regarding consumers  
preferences**

**Evaluate  
quality  
(competitions)**

# Time to work...

- 1) **Silence**
- 2) **Focus on your work, not your partner's**
- 3) **Pay attention and let the oil tell its story**
- 4) **Trust in your senses**