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CNR: Another Xylella-resistant olive cultivar discovered

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Press release - New results from the National Research Council's commitment to finding solutions to the phytosanitary emergency that has been affecting Puglia's olive growing for some years. Researchers from the CNR Institute for Sustainable Protection of Plants, together with colleagues from the University of Bari and the Basile Caramia Research Center, have discovered phenomena of resistance in the 'Fabulous' olive variety, as well as in the 'Leccino'.

Rome, 18 April 2017 - The Xylella fastidiosa epidemic that has been affecting Puglia's olive growing for some years now has crossed the boundaries of the province of Lecce, also involving part of the provinces of Brindisi and Taranto. It is a territory that hosts about twenty million olive trees, a not inconsiderable part of which is now seriously compromised. A

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first time, with results that the researchers call "surprising", stretches of resistance also in the FS-17 cultivar (all 'foreign known as' Fabulous'). This is a selection of seedlings from cv Frantoio obtained from prof. Giuseppe Fontanazza is patented by the Institute for agricultural and forestry systems of the Mediterranean of the Cnr (Isafom-Cnr).

The discovery, just published in the latest issue of L'Informatore Agrario, follows that of the resistance of the cultivar 'Leccino' for which the same team published a transcriptomic analysis in the international journal BMC Genomics in June last year. In recent days the EFSA, the European Food Safety Authority, scientific advisor of the European Commission, published a report which confirms that the 'Leccino' and the FS-17 cultivar are Xylella tolerant. The search for sources of resistance in olive trees is one of the main objectives pursued by the two H2020 Program Projects funded by the European Union: Pest Organisms Threatening Europe (PONTE) and Xylella fastidiosa Active Containment Through a Multidisciplinary-Oriented Research Strategy (Xf-Actors) both coordinated by the Ipsp-Cnr.

"This discovery," said the president of the National Research Council, Massimo Inguscio, "reinforces the hopes of saving the now gravely threatened olive growing in the areas affected by the bacterium. and is the further demonstration

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Francesco Loreto, director of the CNR's Department of Bio-agri-food sciences. "It is a research that focuses attention, and hopes, not only on Italian olive growers and all the olive-growing countries of the Mediterranean, but also on North Africa, South Africa, as far as Argentina, Chile and Australia".

The important result is also the result of the close collaboration between researchers and the productive realities of the territory, such as olive-oil companies, agricultural cooperatives and provincial and national producer organizations. "In the coming weeks a press conference will be organized with the institutions," Loreto announced, "to provide details about the research and prospects for ongoing trials and to communicate the initiatives undertaken, in agreement with the licensees, in order to favor and to control the spread of tolerant olive cultivars, helping a sector and a region already heavily penalized by the epidemic".

Originally published on April 18, 2017 by [THE SCIENCES](http://www.lescienze.it/)
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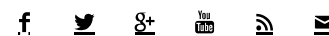
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