

RONTONAR

Good Practice Collection



Introduction

Rontonar Aceites is the project of Miguel Ángel. He takes great care of his family's olive trees, handed down from generation to generation, and also reclaims abandoned land. He fights for an agriculture based on respect for the earth, following the wisdom of the elders and cultivating autochthonous varieties. He practices regenerative agriculture, which seeks to regenerate the soil and increase biodiversity in search of a living land.

Its vision is to be a benchmark in sustainable EVOO production, demonstrating that it is possible to combine excellent quality with absolute respect for the environment. It aims to be a leader in agricultural innovation, promoting regenerative practices that restore soil health and contribute to climate change mitigation. It aims to inspire other small farms to adopt sustainable and regenerative approaches, creating a network of producers committed to a healthier and more balanced future for our planet.

The Farm

Their family farm in Alicante is dedicated to olive cultivation, primarily based on three native varieties from the province of Alicante: "Blanqueta," "Alfarenca," and "Manzanella". Its mission is to produce EVOO of the highest quality through regenerative agricultural practices. Revitalising and protecting the living soil, promoting biodiversity and respecting the natural balance of ecosystems. Through their commitment to sustainability and respect for the earth, they aim to offer their customers an exceptional product that reflects the purity and richness of the natural environment.

The Location

The olive groves are in Benifallim (Alicante), in the words of Miguel Ángel himself: "Benifallim is my village, the village of my parents and grandparents. A village devoted to its mountains, its olive and almond trees. From my parents I learned the love of the land, the devotion to a mother nature that gives us so much good". At Rontonar Aceites they value and protect the natural balance of the environment, as they are aware that the health of soils and ecosystems are fundamental for the quality of their products and the well-being of future generations. As Miguel Ángel states, they strive to minimise environmental impact and maximise soil and ecosystem health through regenerative farming practices. They are continually looking for new ways to improve their farming and production practices, incorporating technologies and methods that favour soil regeneration and biodiversity.

Agricultural regeneration objectives

Through regenerative agriculture, they value and protect the natural balance of their environment, recognising that the health of soils and ecosystems is fundamental to the quality of their products and the well-being of future generations. In addition, they continually seek new ways to improve their farming and production practices, incorporating technologies and methods that promote soil regeneration and biodiversity. In this way, they strive to minimise their environmental impact and maximise the health of their soils and ecosystems through regenerative farming practices.



Best Practice Focus

Soil is the basis of any agricultural system, and in the case of olive groves, soil degradation has been a historical problem. Erosion, loss of organic matter and compaction are the consequences of intensive farming practices. Fortunately, new strategies are revolutionising soil management:

- **Cover crops:** Planting species such as legumes between olive trees not only prevents erosion, but also fixes nitrogen in the soil, reducing the need for synthetic fertilisers. These crops also provide shelter for beneficial insects.
 - **Holistic water management:** Intelligent drip irrigation systems combined with rainwater harvesting make the most of every drop. In arid regions such as Andalucia, this is essential to avoid over-exploitation of aquifers.
 - **Composting and biofertilisers:** Using pruning waste and alperujo (olive by-product) to make compost enriches the soil without relying on chemicals. Some farms have achieved a 30% increase in organic matter in just five years.
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Financial aspects of regenerative measure implementation

Adopting regenerative practices is not only an ethical issue, but also an economic opportunity. Consumers, particularly in Europe, are demanding products with organic certification and transparent traceability. This allows producers to access premium markets and improve margins.

- **Certification and added value:** Labels such as 'Organic Farming' or 'Regenerative Organic Certified' attract buyers who are willing to pay up to 20% more for responsibly produced oil.
 - **Long-term cost reduction:** Although the transition requires initial investment – for example, in efficient irrigation systems or training for workers – the cost of inputs such as fertiliser or pesticides falls dramatically over time.
 - **Local job creation:** Regenerative techniques are often more labour-intensive than conventional techniques, creating jobs in rural areas at high risk of depopulation.
- In addition, collaborative projects between farmers, universities and government agencies encourage innovation.

Main Slogan

"I am fighting for an agriculture based on respect for the earth."

Categorisation, keywords

This regenerative agriculture method falls under the macroarea of Sustainability, within the category of Soil Regeneration and Ecosystem Restoration, with the following measures:

Agroforestry; soil health restoration; regenerative farming techniques; water conservation; organic farming; biodiversity enhancement; pest management; ecosystem services; organic product cultivation; sustainable farming practices.



Advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Soil Health: improves soil fertility and structure, enhancing long-term productivity.
	Water Retention: ground cover and natural practices help retain moisture and prevent erosion.
	Biodiversity: promotes a healthier ecosystem by supporting beneficial insects and microorganisms.
Disadvantages	Higher Initial Costs: transitioning to regenerative practices can require significant upfront investment.
	Slower Results: benefits like soil restoration and biodiversity may take years to become evident.
	Labor-Intensive: requires more manual management and careful planning compared to conventional farming.

Learning points

Knowledge	Understanding of traditional and local varieties as part of genetic and cultural heritage.
	Knowledge of dry farming methods, relying on snow, rain, and fog for water.
	Awareness of the importance of no pesticide or synthetic fertiliser use in sustainable farming.
	Insight into how small scattered plots integrate with natural vegetation for fire prevention.
	Understanding of the role of vegetation cover in soil fertility and erosion prevention.
	Knowledge of the value of borders rich in diverse species for biodiversity.
Skills	Ability to implement sustainable farming practices with minimal water use.
	Expertise in ecological cultivation techniques without chemicals.
	Ability to train others and share knowledge about biodiversity conservation.
	Skill in creating natural firebreaks and enhancing biodiversity through plot design.
	Competence in promoting biodiversity through vegetation management and plot borders.

References/Bibliography

- <https://rontonar.com/>

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Regenerative Agricultural Practices for Environmental Rejuvenation and Sustainable Ecosystems on European Farms



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