

Comments on Identification of Two Triterpenoids in Solid Wastes from Olive Cake

Sir: This letter is written to make some comments on the originality and novelty of a publication by Gil, Haïdour, and Ramos (G–H–R) that appeared in *J. Agric. Food Chem.* (1997, 45, 4490). A few facts are presented.

1. G–H–R state in the Introduction "... an in-depth review of research on pollution by olive oil, production wastes showed that the chemical composition of these wastes is practically unknown...". This is not true because the chemical composition of solvent extractable compounds from olive cake is well documented in the literature. The matter, in fact, has been studied for many years by many research groups (Parisi and De Vito, 1931; Caglioti et al., 1961; Caglioti and Cainelli, 1962; Caputo et al., 1974; Frega et al., 1989) and more recently by my group (Bianchi et al., 1994).

2. "This study allowed us to identify typical fatty acids present in olive oil and two triterpenoids of the oleanane family." This statement in the Introduction, the title of the paper, and, on page 4493, the conclusive statement "From these data we concluded that compounds **1** and **2** can be assigned as methyl 3 β -acetoxyolean-12-en-28-oate and methyl 2 α , 3 β -diacetoxyolean-12-en-28-oate" are misleading. There is no novelty in detecting and identifying compounds **1** and **2** in olive cake as the two acids, trivially called oleanolic and

maslinic acids, respectively, have been previously reported to be the major pentacyclic triterpenic acids present in the cuticular lipid layer of olive fruits and, furthermore, it was plainly suggested that "olive husks may represent a convenient source of the two triterpenic acids" (Bianchi et al., 1994). In addition, the fatty acid composition of olive oil is common knowledge.

LITERATURE CITED

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