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International Award for Toombs Olive Oil **[1]**

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An international team of judges has named an olive oil produced in Toombs County as one of the best olive oils in the world.

The olive oil from Terra Dolce Farms near Lyons was entered in the 2014 New York International Olive Oil Competition. Judges spend four days evaluating 651 entries and the winners were announced by competition President Curtis Cord at a news conference in New York. "The mission of the New York International Olive Oil Competition is to recognize the best olive oil producers in the world," he told reporters.

Terra Dolce Farms is owned by the trio of Darrien Ramsey, Clint Williams and Senator Tommie Williams of Lyons. "I'm shocked and elated all at the same time. It's one more reason to think about Georgia as a place to grow olives," Senator Williams said.

Cord says it's almost unbelievable that Terra Dolce Farms could win a Gold Medal with its very first crop of olive oil. "It's not easy to do that. They're going up against companies which have been doing this for generations all over the world. I don't think we've ever had a winner from Georgia. It's a magnificent achievement, and in your first year, it's almost unbelievable," he said.

Senator Williams said, "I did all the things I thought I was supposed to do, but I didn't really know it would turn out so well. It just goes to show we can grow a good quality oil, but we still don't know what kind of yields we can produce. Winning that award proved for Georgia that we can produce some of the best tasting olive oil in the world."

Terra Dolce Farms planted 3.000 olive trees three years ago to produce its first crop. It's now adding 15,000 more trees of differing varieties to its 30-acre olive grove.

Article and photo courtesy of Your Community Portal, www.southeastgeorgiatoday.com.

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