

O-64 (192)**IRANIAN OLIVE GERMPLASM: HIGH MORPHOLOGICAL AND MOLECULAR DIVERSITY, HIGH QUALITY OF OLIVE OIL****Mehdi Hosseini Mazinani**, National Inst. of Gen. Eng. and Biotech., Tehran, Iran; hosseini@nigeb.ac.ir (Presenting author)**Mr. Mahmoud Salem Haghghi**, Minoodasht, Gorgan, Iran; mahmoud.s.haghghi@gmail.com

During last two decades, with socioeconomic changes and technology progression many traditional olive orchards in Iran have been replaced with the few commercial cultivars. This may threaten the erosion of genetic resources by losing the local diversity. Therefore, the characterization and conservation of these olive genotypes and local ecotypes is a big task for researchers to ensure proper use of these cultivars in the next decades. This congress is a timely occasion to present a status report of new established olive collection in Iran and introduce capabilities and potentials of this Eastern Mediterranean country with a rich heritage of olive growth. In this study we have embarked on a major national program to characterize and preserve Iranian olive germplasm. This program is complemented by molecular studies and have revealed an unexpected diversity in Iranian olive germplasm and laid the groundwork for Iranian olive catalog and establishing new Iranian olive collection in Golestan province. The essential goal of this collection is to maximize the amount of genetic variation, characterize the genotypes and long-term ex-situ conservation of olive genetic resources which are collected all around the country. Large geographic and climatic variation of autochthonous olive growing area reveals the high potential of olives in Iran and high adaptation to extreme climate conditions confirmed the great variety of Iranian olives and ecotypes. Because of significant variation in Iranian olive germplasm, these genotypes considering auspicious results related to the nutritional parameters of oil and seem to be promising varieties which could be applied in olive improving programs in the country.

Keywords: Iran, Olive collection,