



Meet California Olive Grower Sally Campbell

Campbell Ranch, Oroshi, California



Grower:
Sally Campbell

Industry:
Olives
Orosi, California



"Between my children and this grove, being a grower makes me want to be a better person, to produce healthy food in a way that is healthy for the planet. You appreciate how much water you use and how much labor goes into it. It's the best thing that has ever happened to me."

-Sally Campbell

Sally's entrance into the world of farming isn't like most others. Since the 1980s, her passion was in property management - finding neglected homes, fixing them up and bringing them back to life for families to enjoy. You can say the same process happened when Sally first set eyes on an olive grove nestled in the side of a mountain in Oroshi, California six years ago. She immediately saw potential in the 13 acre grove that had been sitting in escrow for a year. Sally knew she could care for it the way it she felt it deserved. So with the same bravery and ambition she used in fixing up old, forgotten homes, Sally purchased the land and became a farmer.

Similar to her career in property management, Sally is very hands-on. If you ask her about her role on the olive grove, she'll tell you she's the owner, weed sprayer, irrigator, repairwoman, manager, and rattlesnake wrangler. And it was the learning process of all those things that has become the most rewarding and memorable period in Sally's budding farming career. "I have tried to learn as much as I can to do justice to the profession," says Sally. "You think you can just plant something and grow it, but you can't. I grow with as much integrity as I can. It's important for me to do it right."

One of the things she loves about her grove is the strength and beauty of the trees. "The way the trees bend in the wind is like a magnificent orchestra," she says. "And when the morning haze filters through the trees, it's just gorgeous. It makes me feel humble."

As Sally works in her grove of majestic trees, she likes to think about how her children will someday own and tend to the same trees, waving for them in the wind and giving them the same joy.

For more information about California's olive industry, visit www.calolive.org.

