

## Inland Empire Orange | Ark of Taste Nomination Form

### PRODUCT NAME

Inland Empire Old Grove Orange, Valencia Old Grove Orange Citrus, Washington Navel Citrus

### CATEGORY

Fresh and dried fruit

### COUNTRY

United States of America

### PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The Inland Old Grove Empire Orange is a small in size, bright orange color in both rind and flesh, with a thin, fine textured skin. The skin is quite oily when peeled, it's essential oils oozing from the rind.

### PRODUCT TASTE

The aroma of the orange has a sweetness, a citrus element, and a 'blossomy' fragrance. It is described as being close to the standard navel orange. The texture is dense and juicy, not watery. The orange has few seeds. The taste is sweet and full-flavored.

### PRODUCT HISTORY

In 1867 Mr. Thomas Rivers imported the rootstock for the Inland Empire Old Grove Orange from the Azores to San Gabriel, California. Mr. A.B. Chapman planted these orange trees and cultivated them, forming the parent stock in the Los Angeles basin in California. Another name for the oranges, known as Old Grove "Valencia" oranges comes from a conversation between Mr. Chapman and a Spanish man who remarked that the oranges were similar to those grown in his home region of Valencia.

In 1870 in the southeastern California town of Redlands, the orange grove industry began in the United States. The Inland Empire Old Grove was later crossed with the Washington navel which allowed it to produce citrus year-round. From the 1900-1945s the citrus industry boomed with the creation of the American railway system, shipping fruit from Southern California to the east coast and onward to Europe. At the time, the fruit was considered the finest in the world. At the peak of the industry, in 1940, seventy-five million cases of fruit were being shipped. But, the end of WWII caused massive development in the Los Angeles Basin which crushed the industry and left behind only a few groves.

The Inland Orange Conservancy (IOC) is working to preserve old groves, mainly in the Redlands and Riverside area. The IOC is being helped by both the city of Redlands and the University of California at Redlands.

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### HISTORICAL PRODUCTION AREA

Los Angeles Basin; Redlands, San Gabriel, Riverside, California

### FOR WHAT REASON IS THIS PRODUCT OR BREED AT RISK OF DISAPPEARING?

All the groves are under significant threat. Because the Inland Old Grove Oranges are small and their skin shows imperfections, they are not marketable in the United States. Instead, they are shipped to Asia. Currently they do not bring in enough money to pay for their harvest.

### POTENTIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE HARVEST OR PRODUCTION SHOULD THE SPECIES REACH A STABLE POPULATION

Currently, the IOC is bypassing the market by creating a membership program in which members pay a set rate, receive weekly shipments of oranges, and are ensuring that more money are in the hands of growers. In the 2006 nomination that we received, the nomination gave the earnings for local growers using this system. The IOC found that the total average returns on a fifty-five pound field box of oranges is five to seven dollars per box. As a grove will cost \$1200 per acre to maintain and there are usually three hundred field boxes in a harvest, this makes for a just and equitable return for farmers.

Sustainable growing practices are used by IOC members and the orchard groves also use very few herbicides. Orchards also make use of historic planting sites and traditional orchard workers, sometimes even using multi-generational pickers.

### IS THE PRODUCT FOR SALE ON THE MARKET?

Produced in limited quantities.

**Producer:** Inland Orange Conservancy

**Website:** [www.inlandorange.org](http://www.inlandorange.org)

### NAME OF PERSON SUPPLYING THE APPLICATION

Elissa Rubin-Mahon (original)  
Megan Larmer, Slow Food USA (2013)  
Alexandra Emanuelli, Slow Food USA (2013)