

Moroccan city outlaws olive trees

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A Moroccan city has banned olive trees because of pollen-linked allergies and set an end-of-the-year deadline for residents to remove them, media reports said Thursday.

The [town hall](#) in Oujda, a [city](#) of half a million in northeast Morocco near the border with Algeria, has ordered their removal from all areas, whether it be around private homes, on pavements or in [public gardens](#).

The pollen during the flowering season in the spring is "one of the main causes of seasonal respiratory allergies", said the mayor, Omar Hijra, a professional pharmacist.

He told the website Media 24 that [olive trees](#) accounted for as much as 90 percent of all trees planted in some areas.

If the trees are not removed by December 31, the municipality will carry out the work and charge the home owner, he said, adding however that the whole operation could take up to five years in public areas because of the number of trees.

In theory, the owners are meant to replant the olive trees outside the city or sell them.

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