



NORTH AMERICAN OLIVE OIL ASSOCIATION

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NAOOA RELEASES REPORTS HIGHLIGHTING ACCURATE OLIVE OIL TESTING AND CONSUMER SAFETY *360-degree view of olive oil quality and purity*

NEPTUNE, N.J. — May 27, 2015 – The North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA) — a non-profit group that promotes the health, versatility and authenticity of all types of olive oil for North American consumers — is releasing two reports commissioned to clarify the full story behind olive oil labeling, quality and purity.

The reports are being released following the recently implemented standards for a select group of California olive oil producers under the newly formed Olive Oil Commission of California (OOC).

The NAOOA collaborated with the California olive oil industry in the past to help establish internationally based standards in California in 2009 and through the USDA in 2010. In 2013, some California producers asserted their products couldn't meet the international standards and instead advocated to create special standards for local producers under the OOC. Despite significant trade and scientific concerns raised by the global olive oil industry, the standards were approved in September 2014.

Dr. Islam A. Siddiqui, the former U.S. Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and currently serving as Senior Adviser for Global Food Security at the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC, was commissioned by the NAOOA to report on implications of the new California standards. The report, [“The Olive Oil Commission of California’s 2014 Grade and Labeling Standards: Analysis & Implications.”](#) demonstrates the olive oil standards created by the OOC have narrow reach and fail to address adulteration of olive oil, despite producer claims that such adulteration is a major problem.

“Ensuring authenticity and quality of all olive oil, whatever its provenance, is crucial. Consumers choose olive oil because of its health benefits,” says Eryn Balch, Executive VP, NAOOA.



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Besides adding new tests deemed unreliable by the global industry, the OOC standards eliminate certain chemical analyses necessary to detect adulteration. This testing does not ensure the authenticity and quality of olive oil consumers deserve.

The second NAOOA report, "[Random Testing of Store-Bought California Extra Virgin Olive Oils: 67% Fail New Olive Oil Commission of California \(OCC\) Standards.](#)" examines random testing of California olive oils carried out in early 2015, and compares the results with both International Olive Council (IOC) and OOC standards.

"The NAOOA collected 18 California-produced extra virgin olive oils from stores just as consumers would buy them, and results showed 67 percent of the California oils tested failed at least one measure of the new California standards, while 28 percent failed one of the IOC quality standards," added Balch. "The results raise significant questions about the validity of the OOC standards and confirm the new tests incorporated in the standards are not reliable."

For complete, downloadable reports and more information on the NAOOA and its work, visit www.aboutoliveoil.org.

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