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**INAUGURAL OLIVE OIL CONFERENCE
TO FOCUS ON HEALTH BENEFITS, COOKING TECHNIQUES AND FLAVOR PROFILES**
*August event includes olive oil tastings and features
NYC chef Seamus Mullen & author Dr. Connie Guttersen, R.D.*

NEPTUNE, N.J. — June 12, 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 — announces registration is open for its Inaugural [Olive Oil Conference](#) — ‘Spend Wisely on Olive Oil’— to be held Aug. 25 and 26 at the Westin O’Hare, near Chicago in Rosemont, Ill.

“North Americans love heart-healthy olive oils,” says Eryn Balch, NAOOA executive vice-president. “Even though flavor and health benefits have led to its use in more than 50 percent of households, we still have a long way to go. Mediterranean consumers use 11 to 15 liters of olive oil a year, much more than North Americans who consume only about one liter per year. Communication is key: Surveys show many consumers still have questions about *how* and *what type of* olive oil they should use when cooking— and *what* they should be looking for when purchasing olive oil.”

The conference, targeted toward olive oil enthusiasts including food industry and foodservice professionals; retail buyers, category managers and salespeople; chefs; nutritionists; dietitians; educators and consumers — will educate attendees about the health benefits of olive oil, techniques to incorporate olive oil into a range of recipes for home and restaurant cooks, and what to look for when tasting individual oils.

Award-winning chef and cookbook author [Seamus Mullen](#) will demonstrate the range of olive oils in diverse cooking techniques from roasting and frying to replacing butter in baked goods. He'll show how olive oil works in various world cuisines as well. Chef Mullen, behind New York City hotspots Tertulia and El Colmado Butchery, is the author of *Hero Food: How Cooking with Delicious Things Can Make Us Feel Better* and a three-time semifinalist for the James Beard Foundation's Best Chef NYC. He credits olive oil as a tool in his fight against rheumatoid arthritis.

[Dr. Connie Guttersen, R.D.](#), *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Sonoma Diet* and *The Sonoma Cookbook*, will be speaking about the health, flavor, and nutritional benefits of olive oils compared to other cooking oils and fats. She'll also be demonstrating recipes and sharing tips for cooking with olive oil at home. Dr. Guttersen is a registered dietitian and an instructor at the world-famous Culinary Institute of America.

All attendees will have opportunities to practice olive oil tasting techniques and discover the finer points of sensory, or organoleptic, assessment based on methods from [International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Savantes](#). Simon Field, founder, is a producer of organic olive products and an olive industry consultant who has traveled to growing regions worldwide and tasted thousands of olive oils. Participants will experience olive oils through taste, sight and smell and learn how practice can educate the palate. Attendees may also choose to enter the North American Extra Virgin Olive Oil Taster's Championship, which will test skills such as identifying different varieties and regions, ranking intensities, and detecting faults.

Hayley Stevens Miller, a graduate from the Corso Superiore at the renowned Italian culinary school, Alma, in Parma, Italy, will also be demonstrating olive oil in restaurant cooking. She honed her olive oil bona fides in kitchens from the north to south of Italy, including the two Michelin-starred restaurant Don Alfonso.

“People are returning in droves to diets of whole, natural and unprocessed foods. And olive oil fits in perfectly,” adds Balch. “It’s an oil that comes simply — direct from crushed fruit. Olive oil has such unique benefits as well — benefits that don’t come with any other cooking oil. The conference is a perfect opportunity to learn what makes olive oil so unique and to stay up to date with what’s happening in the industry. It’s all designed to help attendees grow their expertise and expand their use of olive oil to better connect with customers and meet the needs of today’s sophisticated consumer.”

For a complete schedule of events, additional information and to register for the Spend Wisely on Olive Oil Conference, visit www.oliveoilconference.com. For more about the North American Olive Oil Association, visit www.aboutliveoil.com.

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