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**HEALTH BENEFITS, FLAVOR RANGE, AND ADAPTABILITY  
MAKE “OLIVE OIL. THE ONE YOU LOVE.”**

*North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA) launches consumer initiative*

NEPTUNE, N.J. — JULY 14, 2015 — The [North American Olive Oil Association](#) (NAOOA), a nonprofit group that promotes the health, versatility and authenticity of all types of olive oil for North American consumers, today announces a new campaign initiative — “Olive Oil. The One You Love.” The initiative is designed to educate and encourage consumers to use heart-healthy olive oil more often to best take advantage of its many culinary and health benefits.

“By engaging with the ‘Olive Oil. The One You Love,’ initiative, consumers will gain confidence to pick out olive oils that provide good value, are appropriate selections for different uses, bring important wellness benefits to the family dinner table and order more menu items made with olive oil at restaurants,” said Eryn Balch, NAOOA executive vice-president. “There’s great opportunity to further inform consumers about the wide range of available olive oils — so they’ll have more in their kitchen cupboard to choose from and use more often.”

North American enjoyment of olive oil has skyrocketed over the last few years. Five years ago, only 30 percent of households in the United States used olive oil. Today, it’s 50 percent — making the U.S. the third-largest consumer of olive oil in the world. And there’s room to grow: Countries that follow the heart-healthy Mediterranean Diet, like Greece, use on average 20 liters per person per year; and Spain and Italy average about 12 liters per person, per year. But in the U.S., households average just one liter per capita per year.

Olive oil's taste is influenced by many of the same factors seen in the wine industry, including olive variety, where it was grown, seasonal crop conditions and how well it was handled and produced. "Most consumers are aware that olive oil is delicious and healthful, and are using it for certain dishes. But they're not using a variety of olive oils in their kitchen, and aren't taking full advantage of its versatility," said award-winning chef and cookbook author Seamus Mullen. "Nearly every kind of fats or oil — vegetable or canola oil, butter, margarine, shortening — can be replaced with health-boosting olive oil in cooking and baking."

"Extra virgin olive oils have a wide range of flavors, from subtle and understated to a strong peppery bite. Olive oil is a fantastic everyday cooking oil and easily adapts to cooking methods like grilling, sautéing, roasting, frying and baking," said Dr. Connie Guttersen, dietitian and nutrition instructor at the world-famous Culinary Institute of America and author of the New York Times best seller *The Sonoma Diet*. "The delicate flavor of regular olive oil enhances food without overpowering a dish and provides a good base oil for spice-infused dressings and hearty sauces. Light-tasting olive oil is almost flavorless, so it can be used for all the same cooking methods as olive oil, but I especially like it in preparations where I don't want to influence the flavor of the dish."

To further support its campaign initiative, the NAOOA is hosting its inaugural [Olive Oil Conference](#) — 'Spend Wisely on Olive Oil' — Aug. 25 and 26 at the Westin O'Hare, near Chicago. The conference is targeted toward olive oil enthusiasts — including food industry and foodservice professionals; retail buyers, category managers and salespeople; chefs; nutritionists; dietitians; educators and consumers — and 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.

Established in 1989, the North American Olive Oil Association is a trade association of marketers, packagers and importers of olive oil in the United States, Canada and their respective suppliers abroad. The association strives to foster a better understanding of

olive oil and its taste, versatility and health benefits. For more information, visit [www.aboutliveoil.org](http://www.aboutliveoil.org) and [www.oliveoilconference.com](http://www.oliveoilconference.com).

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