



Statement by the North American Olive Oil Association on Standard of Identity Petition Filing

NEPTUNE, NJ – November 6, 2019 – The [North American Olive Oil Association](#) (NAOOA), whose members represent the majority of olive oil sold in the United States, has been a longtime advocate for a uniform national standard of identity for olive oil. We filed our own citizen’s petition with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2012, on which the FDA never acted. Following meetings with the FDA in June and September of this year, we recently withdrew the 2012 petition in order to pave the way for a new updated petition we intend to file before the end of 2019.

The petition filed this week shows we are not alone in our belief that olive oil needs a federal standard of identity to eliminate confusion among consumers and promote fair dealing in the industry. In the process of developing a standard of identity, we believe it’s important to listen to a variety of voices from regulators to consumers to industry players, large and small alike. We’ve worked hard to bring everyone in the industry together, including the petitioners, over the past two years to find common ground on this important matter. The entities that filed the recent joint petition represent a small but meaningful share of the U.S. market, and it’s a positive development to see them support many of the same goals for which our broader organization has advocated for years.

The NAOOA’s forthcoming petition will in some key respects go further than the Nov. 5 petition in protecting consumers with respect to quality and authenticity. Our petition will recommend that the FDA’s standard of identity be rooted in widely accepted global standards like Codex, in which the United States actively participates. It will also consider adopting new testing techniques as soon as they are sufficiently tested and proven reliable for their intended purposes. Adopting such standards would not only benefit consumers but also help domestic producers enter new international markets, most of which rely on these standards.

We look forward to continuing to work with the FDA to develop a standard of identity for olive oil that gives consumers even greater confidence in the olive oil they buy.

About the North American Olive Oil Association

Established in 1989, the North American Olive Oil Association is a trade association of producers, marketers, packagers and importers of olive oil in the United States, Canada and their respective suppliers abroad. The association provides its members, among other services, with guidelines on labeling and quality, and a [quality seal certification program](#), which was the first in the country. The NAOOA is also a member of the International Olive Council’s Agreement for the Quality and Control of the Olive Oils and Olive-Pomace Oils Sold on Import Markets, through which the NAOOA has been able to conduct random off-the-shelf quality control testing of upwards of 200 samples per year. The association strives to foster a better understanding of olive oil and its taste, versatility and health benefits. For more information, visit www.AboutOliveOil.org and www.OliveOilConference.com.