

# NAOOA: Federal Standards, Industry Program Aim to Accelerate Olive Oil Growth as Tariffs Threaten Affordability

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-- The North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA) today issued its "2026 State of the Industry," marking the beginning of a pivotal year for the U.S. olive oil market.



With olive oil now specifically prioritized in the federal Dietary Guidelines, we have a timely opportunity to provide consumers with accurate, accessible information grounded in science."

*Joseph R. Profaci, Executive Director*

Following a turbulent 36-month cycle defined by extreme climate events, supply shortages, trade actions and a refocus of U.S. health policy, the NAOOA is addressing five major shifts reshaping the landscape: critical bipartisan legislation in Congress, global market consolidation, the evolving tariff environment, a potential U.S. research and promotion program, and a push to ensure continued consumer confidence.

Olive oil household penetration now stands at 50.9% (Nielsen), reflecting broader consumer adoption of Mediterranean diet principles and a growing preference for natural, heart-healthy fats in American kitchens. This

momentum underscores the importance of both federal policy support and industry coordination at a critical inflection point for the category.

1. Legislative Momentum: The NAOOA formally announces its strong support for the bipartisan Olive Oil Standards Act, recently introduced by Rep. Josh Harder (CA-09) and Rep. David Valadao (CA-22). This landmark legislation directs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to establish a national Standard of Identity (SOI) for olive oil, a move the NAOOA has long advocated for to eliminate confusion and prevent fraud.

"We applaud Reps. Harder and Valadao for championing this cause," said Joseph R. Profaci, Executive Director of the NAOOA. "For too long, the lack of a uniform federal standard has contributed to confusion among consumers. In 2022, we [petitioned](#) FDA to create an olive oil standard, but it has languished in regulatory review. This bill will help get it over the goal line. When combined with industry self-regulation and FDA oversight, a federal standard will help

address consumer label confusion and build their trust in one of the healthiest foods we can eat."

## 2. Market Dynamics & Consolidation:

The industry notes the significant restructuring of the domestic supply chain following the recent acquisition of California Olive Ranch (COR) by Cobram Estate, a company with Australian roots.

"This merger creates a trans-Pacific powerhouse that underscores the global nature of our industry," Profaci noted. "While ownership structures change, our mission remains constant: ensuring that every bottle on the shelf—whether domestic or imported—meets the strict standards American consumers deserve. We

hope it will signal a chance to bring the industry further together to pursue common goals."

3. Trade & Tariffs: As the industry navigates the 2025/2026 crop year, trade policy remains a primary headwind. With the imposition of tariffs amid ongoing trade disputes, the NAOOA continues to advocate for sensible trade policies that take health policy objectives into account, like those announced in the recently released 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

"Tariffs on olive oil act as a tax on health, given that the U.S. produces less than 3% of America's demand for olive oil," Profaci added. "We're actively engaging with the Administration to seek an exemption from tariffs on olive oil, pointing out the inconsistency of encouraging more consumption on one hand while making it less affordable on the other."

4. Research & Promotion Initiative: The NAOOA is leading industry efforts to establish a national olive oil research and promotion program, currently under review by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA). If approved, the program would create a dedicated, industry-funded mechanism to support consumer education and category promotion at a level not previously possible. It would also enable scientific research, including work to expand domestic olive oil production.

"This is about the industry speaking with one voice to help Americans understand the many benefits of olive oil," Profaci explained. "With olive oil now specifically prioritized in the federal



NAOOA Logo

Dietary Guidelines, we have a timely opportunity to provide consumers with accurate, accessible information grounded in science. This program would give the industry the tools to deliver that education consistently and at scale."

5. Testing and Transparency: The "crisis harvests" of 2022-2024, with record multi-year heat waves and drought in the Mediterranean, are now in the rearview mirror. The recently issued NAOOA [2024 Testing Study](#) confirms that despite the production challenges during that period, the purity rate of the mainstream market remained rock-solid, with no adulteration (i.e., no undisclosed mixing with non-olive oils) found in 190 samples of olive oil representing top 15 brands (85% of the market) and 37 private label "store brands" from off-the-shelf purchases at U.S. and Canadian retailers.

Building on this foundation of market integrity, in the coming weeks, the NAOOA will unveil expanded monitoring and transparency initiatives informed by additional data on olive oil quality from the 2024 Testing Study, designed to further strengthen consumer confidence as the category continues to grow.

About NAOOA: Established in 1989, the North American Olive Oil Association is a trade association of producers, marketers, packagers, and importers of olive oil dedicated to establishing and upholding the integrity of the olive oil industry.

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