



GET THE FACTS:

UC DAVIS' EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL REPORT

There have been frequent public claims that a University of California Davis Olive Center report published in 2010 found that 69 percent of imported extra virgin olive oil sold in the U.S. is "fake" (i.e., adulterated with lower-grade oils). This is false and misleading, and here's why.

Taste Tests are Subjective



The report claimed two-thirds of imported samples labeled as extra virgin olive oil did not meet sensory standards (i.e., taste testing), which is a subjective measure.

Chemical Lab Tests are Objective



Using chemical lab tests — the ONLY accurate way to tell if an oil has been adulterated — the report found NO signs of adulteration, based on International Olive Council (IOC) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards.

The Report Had Industry Funding



The report was funded by California olive oil producers and companies, which have a financial interest in increasing market share and damaging the reputation of imported oils. The only brands reported to pass every test in the report are brands from organizations that funded the report.

Scientifically Meaningless Sample Size



The number of samples was statistically very small (52) and only from California, rendering the results scientifically meaningless. Additionally, samples in the study were not collected by independent agents.

The Results Could Not Be Replicated



Class-action attorneys attempted to reproduce the UC Davis results and failed, finding that "replicating the UC Davis tests proved impossible."



These attorneys had a strong financial interest to see those test results successfully reproduced, but they still couldn't do it.

UC Davis: It's Frequently Misinterpreted



"[The report] partly got misinterpreted because it's easier in the media to report that something's fake. It also plays into the bigger story about inauthenticity in food." - Dan Flynn, executive director of the UC Davis Olive Center, in an interview with [The Seattle Times](#). The article added, "[Flynn] also suspects that many people who wrote about the report didn't actually read it." Selina Wang, the research director who co-wrote the 2010 report, also [told Refinery 29](#) "fake" or adulterated olive oil isn't a problem.

More Than 98% of Olive Oil Sold in the U.S. is Authentic



Data from the NAOOA's testing of hundreds of olive oils annually in independent IOC labs over 25 years supports the finding that more than 98 percent of olive oil sold in U.S. retail outlets is authentic. Our [NAOOA Certified Quality Seal Program](#) is even more robust, requiring products to be submitted for chemical lab testing more frequently and by including organoleptic analysis. Brands that participate in the NAOOA Certified Quality Seal Program agree to have samples taken directly from the retail marketplace, just as any consumer would buy them.

For more information on the NAOOA, please visit www.aboutoliveoil.org.