



Indian Olive Association

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IOA PULSE

THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN FOR INDIA'S OLIVE OIL INDUSTRY



NURTURING INDIA'S OLIVE OIL INDUSTRY

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear IOA Members,

It is my privilege and honour to serve as the President of the Indian Olive Association as we embark on an exciting phase of growth and transformation for our industry.

India's olive oil market stands at an inflection point. With consumer awareness rising, health-consciousness driving food choices, and accessibility rapidly, we have a tremendous opportunity to establish olive oil as an essential part of Indian kitchens—not just in metros, but across the country.

The global olive sector has undergone a period of extraordinary change over the last few years. Climate-driven disruptions, prolonged droughts across key Mediterranean regions, and sharp price volatility have tested the resilience of the olive ecosystem worldwide. As recent global assessments indicate, olive oil production in major producing regions has begun to stabilize after two challenging seasons, with supply and trade flows gradually returning closer to long-term averages. While this recovery brings reassurance, it also serves as an important reminder: olives and olive oil remain agricultural products deeply linked to climate, geography, and sustainability, and therefore require a long-term, responsible approach to growth.

As the Indian Olive Association, our foremost responsibility is to safeguard the interests of Indian consumers while nurturing the long-term development of the olive category. Consumer trust remains the foundation on which sustainable growth is built. This means promoting transparency and product integrity across the olive value chain — covering olive oil, table olives, and olive-derived

products — so that every consumer can rely on the purity and authenticity of what they bring into their homes. By ensuring correct representation and upholding rigorous standards, we empower consumers to make informed choices based on facts, not myths or exaggerated claims. An informed consumer is a protected consumer.

Recent global trends also underline the importance of stability and credibility. While producer prices have moderated from the historic highs seen during drought-affected years, global trade remains dynamic, with major markets such as the United States accounting for a significant share of olive oil imports. Such developments reinforce the need for India to build its olive category thoughtfully — through education, quality assurance, and predictable practices — rather than short-term reactions driven by price or supply fluctuations. On this front, the recently concluded EU–India Free Trade Agreement of January 2026 marks a meaningful milestone. The phased elimination of import duties on olive oil creates a more enabling environment for the category to grow accessibly and responsibly — and places an even greater obligation on all of us to ensure that this opportunity translates into genuine consumer benefit, not merely volume growth.

Strengthening the olive ecosystem in India requires collective action. Brands, importers, nutrition experts, our channel partners, regulators,



Mr. Vishal Gupta



policymakers, and the food service industry must work together to establish and uphold clear standards, quality benchmarks, and scientifically grounded communication. Olives & Olive oil should not be positioned as niche, foreign, or occasional products, but as versatile and credible components of modern Indian diets — relevant across cuisines, consumption occasions, and age groups.

Equally important is our role in encouraging responsible growth. The olive sector globally is increasingly recognized as a strategic agri-food category, supported by policy frameworks aimed at market stability and sustainability. In India, this places a responsibility on us, as an industry body, to balance growth ambitions with consumer protection, long-term value creation, and nutritional integrity. As the FTA moves toward ratification and eventual implementation, IOA will remain actively

engaged with policymakers to ensure the transition benefits the entire ecosystem — consumers, importers, and brands alike.

The Indian Olive Association aims to serve as a neutral and credible platform — bridging global realities with Indian needs, supporting category education, and fostering collaboration across stakeholders. Together, we have the opportunity to build not just a market, but a resilient and trusted olive ecosystem in India — one that places consumer confidence, transparency, and long-term well-being at its core.

Warm regards

Vishal Gupta

**President, Indian Olive Association
Managing Director Borges India**

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS

The Indian Olive oil market which had peaked in CY2021 is now recovering from the turbulence of the draught led price hike from the last few years indicating a confidence of adoption to the Indian consumers signalling a focus on wellness space. Trajectory is driven by several converging factors including rising disposable incomes, increasing health awareness, urbanization, recovery in prices, and growing popularity of mediterranean cuisines in Indian households.

Expansion of quick commerce and e-commerce platforms

has also made premium olive oil more accessible to consumers across tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

While Pure Olive Oil continues to dominate the premium segment, there is notable growth in the Pomace olive oil categories as consumers explore different applications and price points. The cooking segment is witnessing particularly strong growth as Indian consumers increasingly adopt olive oil for everyday cooking beyond salads and dressings.

EU–India FTA & IOA's Advocacy on Import Duty Rationalization: A Turning Point for the Industry

The Indian Olive Association has long been engaged in structured dialogue with key stakeholders — advocating for rationalization of olive oil import duties, which currently stand at 40-45%. IOA's representations have consistently highlighted that olive oil is not domestically produced in commercial quantities in India, that high duties disproportionately limit accessibility for middle-class consumers, and that rationalized duties would expand the overall market, ultimately growing government revenues through volume. The association has been preparing comprehensive data on market potential, consumer demand, and the health economy benefits of increased olive oil consumption to strengthen this case.

These advocacy efforts have found powerful momentum in a landmark development: India and the European Union concluded a Free Trade Agreement on January 27, 2026 — the largest FTA ever concluded by either side — which includes the elimination of olive oil import tariff, either immediately or over a five-year phased period. While the agreement still requires ratification in both the EU and India before it enters into force, likely by early 2027, it validates everything the industry has stood for. IOA will continue to actively engage with different stakeholders through the ratification process to ensure a smooth and timely implementation that benefits all members.



IOA would like to actively engage with international olive oil bodies to strengthen knowledge transfer, quality standards, and market development practices. It is proposed that discussions with the International Olive Council (IOC) and Mediterranean olive oil producer associations should focus on:

- Adoption of international quality and authenticity standards
- Technical training programs for quality assessment

- Joint consumer education initiatives
- B2B facilitation between Indian importers and Mediterranean producers
- Sustainability and traceability best practices

These partnerships will help Indian consumers access authentic, high-quality olive oil while ensuring IOA members benefit from global expertise and market intelligence.

Regulatory & compliance update

Indian regulators are increasing control over how edible oils are produced, declared and tested, and olive oil will feel these changes even though most rules are written for “vegetable oils” in general.

1. New rules for vegetable oil producers

- A recent amendment to the Vegetable Oil Products Production and Availability Regulation Order, 2011 now gives a wider, clearer definition of “vegetable oil/olive oil” and “vegetable oil product/olive oil product”, covering all processed and blended oils.
- Any producer who makes, stocks or sells vegetable oils must register with the Directorate of Sugar and Vegetable Oils and file monthly returns showing production, imports, sales and stocks.
- Authorities can inspect premises, check records and seize stock if numbers on paper do not match what is on the ground.

For olive oil importers, refiners and blenders, this means tighter visibility of volumes, blends and inventories under the generic “vegetable oil” umbrella.

2. Legal Metrology: more focus on accurate measurement

- From 1 January 2026, new Legal Metrology General (Fourth Amendment) Rules, 2025 introduce detailed technical and accuracy rules for moisture meters used for cereal grains and oilseeds.
- Instruments must meet strict accuracy limits, be properly sealed and marked, and have secure software and audit trails.

While this is about grain and oilseeds, it shows the direction: more precise, instrument-level control that can affect weighing, testing and packing equipment used across the edible oil chain, including olive oil.

3. Food testing labs and enforcement

- FSSAI has updated the validity list of notified food testing laboratories, including their accreditation status and expiry dates.
- Some labs are fully accredited, some are under suspension or denotification, and details are explicitly flagged.

For the olive oil industry, using only currently valid FSSAI-notified labs for testing (FFA, peroxide value, contaminants) will be essential, especially in case of import checks or disputes on grade and quality.

KNOWLEDGE HUB

Olive Oil & Heart Health: The Scientific Evidence

Recent clinical studies continue to validate the cardiovascular benefits of olive oil consumption. The Mediterranean diet, rich in extra virgin olive oil, has been associated with reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.

Key Health Benefits:

- Rich in monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) that support heart health
- Contains powerful antioxidants including polyphenols and vitamin E
- Anti-inflammatory properties
- Potential benefits for cognitive health

These scientifically-backed benefits provide strong messaging for consumer education initiatives. IOA encourages members to use credible, evidence-based claims in their marketing communications.



MEMBERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

Join the IOA Community

The Indian Olive Association welcomes importers, distributors, brands, retailers, and allied service providers in the olive oil ecosystem. Membership benefits include:

- Voice in policy advocacy and government representations
- Access to market intelligence and industry data
- Networking with industry peers
- Participation in trade delegations and B2B events
- Regulatory guidance and compliance support
- Consumer education resources and marketing collateral

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