

Calif. olive oil producers try to compete with imports

By David Pierson, Los Angeles Times

There's a war over your salad dressing, and the front line has been drawn in California.

The Golden State is considering first-of-its-kind grading standards for olive oil that could have far-reaching consequences for the \$5.4-billion global industry.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture may soon agree to require testing and certification for purity and quality. New labeling could also be introduced that would bar common terms such as "light" and "pure" olive oil.

The proposed standards would apply only to the largest California olive growers and millers, but they drew a rebuke from the European Union and the olive oil importer community, which view the rules as a blueprint for wider trade restrictions.

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