



## **MT. OLIVE PICKLE COMPANY, INC.**

Corner of Cucumber & Vine  
Mount Olive, NC 28365  
[www.mtolivepickles.com](http://www.mtolivepickles.com)

### **HISTORY**

The Mt. Olive Pickle Company, Inc., located at the Corner of Cucumber & Vine in Mount Olive, North Carolina, was originally founded to brine cucumbers to be sold to other pickling firms. When that plan didn't work, 37 local business people came together to establish the company for the purpose of packing and selling its own pickle products. From a modest beginning in 1926, with only a 3,600 square-foot building and \$19,500 in capital, the Mt. Olive Pickle Company has grown to become the largest independent pickle company in the United States. The company packs over 90 million jars of processed and fresh pack pickles, relishes and peppers annually.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

Mt. Olive is the second best-selling brand of pickles in the country, and its products can now be found in all 50 states. In the Southeast, Mt. Olive is the number one brand, and its share of pickle sales in some markets approaches 70%. The company maintains its own direct sales force, which manages a network of food brokers to sell its products throughout its market area.

### **FACILITIES**

The company's facilities are located on 110 acres of land (including the original one acre purchased in 1926) with approximately 675,000 square feet of production, office and warehouse space. The company has over 1,200 fiberglass and plastic brine vats, with storage capacity in excess of 40 million pounds of cucumbers.

### **PRODUCTION**

Each year, Mt. Olive uses over 130 million pounds of cucumbers and peppers. About 35 million pounds of cucumbers are received from independent growers in North Carolina in the months of June, and on a much smaller scale, September. North Carolina is second in the nation in the agricultural production of pickling cucumbers. At other times of the year, Mt. Olive purchases fresh cucumbers grown in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio, Michigan and Mexico. Brined cucumber and pepper products are also purchased from India and Greece. The company operates two shifts of production year-round.

### **RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**

The company has developed close ties with research universities like N.C. State University in everything from horticulture to food science to engineering. These relationships have helped the company remain at the forefront of the industry with cucumber and pickle production developments, as well as waste management methods. Researchers in the late 1960s conducted a series of controlled fermentation studies at Mt. Olive that improved brining methods throughout the industry. The company continues as one of the industry leaders involved in research directed at further reducing the quantity of salt used in the brining process. In other areas, the company was the first in the nation to use high fructose corn syrup sweeteners instead of sugar. In 2002, Mt. Olive was the first pickle brand to introduce a line of No Sugar Added sweet pickle products, using the no calorie sweetener sucralose. And, in 2007, the company introduced its picklePAK line, the first pickle products offered in single-serve cups.

### **EMPLOYEES**

The Mt. Olive Pickle Company has about 500 year-round employees, and over 800 employees during the busiest part of the intake season each summer. The company's management is particularly proud of its Employee Profit Sharing and Savings Plan, established in 1943 and one of the first in the country. In 2003 the company was recognized by the North Carolina Department of Labor as a Carolina Star / Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) site. Mt. Olive is the first pickle company in the nation to be so recognized for its effective safety and health management.

### **COMMUNITY**

Mt. Olive is named for its hometown, a community of less than 5,000 people in Eastern North Carolina. Each April, the community celebrates the N.C. Pickle Festival, and proceeds benefit local initiatives. Residents also turn out for the annual New Year's Eve Pickle Drop, held at the Corner of Cucumber & Vine at 7 p.m. (midnight Greenwich Mean Time.) In addition, the company and its employees contribute generously in cash and product donations to community organizations each year.