

# Culinary Explorer Anubhav Sapra Reveals the Science Behind India's Street Food and Misleading Food Labels

Category: Business

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From crispy pakoras to delicious samosas, street food is an emotion across India. Yet behind every perfectly fried snack lies the unseen role of the oil that makes it possible. A podcast series features culinary explorer and Delhi Food Walks founder Anubhav Sapra, who simplifies the role of cooking oils in street food and clears confusion around misleading food labels.



## **Culinary Explorer Anubhav Sapra Reveals the Science Behind India's Street Food and Misleading Food Labels**

### **Episode Overview**

In the first Episode, "**Silent Hero: The Science of What We Eat**," Anubhav explains why palm oil is widely used by vendors. Its high-heat stability, neutral taste, and consistent frying performance help deliver the signature crispness of Indian snacks.

In the next Episode, "**No Palm Oil? Don't Be Fooled**," he discusses the growing wave of "**No Palm Oil**" labels and why these tags often create misleading perceptions of health. Anubhav urges shoppers to read entire ingredient lists and nutrition facts instead of relying on front-of-pocket (FoP) claims.

### **Influencer Insights**

Across both episodes, Anubhav highlights:

- Street vendors value oils that stay stable at high temperatures and have a high smoke point and does not

break down easily.

- Palm oil's neutral taste keeps authentic flavours intact.
- Many consumers are unaware that palm oil is naturally trans-fat free and cholesterol-free.
- Safe cooking habits matter: use fresh oil, avoid overheating, and rotate different oils at home.

### **What Science Says About Palm Oil**

Palm oil is naturally cholesterol-free, as cholesterol is found only in animal-based fats. When consumed as part of a balanced diet, palm oil has a neutral impact on blood cholesterol levels. It also contains vitamin E compounds known as tocotrienols, which are recognised for their potent antioxidant properties and potential role in supporting cellular and cardiovascular health.

### **Aligned With ICMR Dietary Guidelines**

Reiterating the ICMR–NIN 2024 guidelines, it's recommended to use oils/fats in appropriate amounts and choose a variety of oilseeds, nuts, nutriceals, and legumes to meet daily needs of fats and Essential Fatty Acids (EFA).

### **NMEO–OP: India's Edible Oil Goals**

Anubhav also touches upon India's broader efforts to strengthen its edible oil ecosystem. India's National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO–OP), which aims to boost oil palm area by an additional 6.5 lakh hectares by 2025-26, and eventually to 16.71 lakh hectares by 2029-30, with a special focus on the North-Eastern states and reduce reliance on imports.

## **Understanding “No Palm Oil” Labels**

Industry bodies like IFBA and OTAI have cautioned that these labels are often marketing tactics rather than indicators of nutritional superiority. Consumers are encouraged to look at the complete nutrition ingredients, including sugar, salt and overall fat content. Through street-level stories and food science, these episodes help listeners focus on the important information, and make informed dietary choices.

Link to Episode 3: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvBYj6cjM04](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvBYj6cjM04)

Link to Episode 4: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rqmp\\_tx2nlQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rqmp_tx2nlQ)

## **About the Series**

This is a six-episode podcast series by the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) designed to address misinformation and share scientific facts about palm oil in a simple, relatable way. Each episode brings expert voices and everyday perspectives to topics like nutrition, health, and sustainability helping listeners replace myths with understanding. With these conversations, MPOC hopes to encourage balanced, fact-based discussions and highlight palm oil’s rightful place as a versatile, nutritious, and sustainably produced edible oil.

