

Javid Javdani Advocates for Balanced Perspectives on Processed Foods and Access to Fresh Ingredients



San Diego, California Nov 28, 2024 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Javid Javdani, owner of Balboa Market, an international food market in San Diego, is raising awareness about the nuanced role of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) in health and advocating for increased access to fresh, minimally processed ingredients. This comes in light of a recent World Health Organization (WHO)-backed study, published in The Lancet, that challenges the blanket demonization of UPFs.

The study revealed that while certain UPFs, such as sugary drinks and processed meats, increase the risk of serious health conditions like cancer and heart disease, others, including bread and cereals rich in fiber, can reduce health risks. Javdani sees this as an opportunity to encourage thoughtful consumer choices and to push for greater access to fresh and minimally processed foods in communities.

"Food isn't black and white," Javdani says. "This study shows that not all processed foods are harmful, and some can even be beneficial. But the real issue is access—many people don't have the option to choose fresh, high-quality ingredients because they're either too expensive or simply unavailable."

According to the study, 50-60% of daily energy intake in high-income countries comes from UPFs, underscoring the importance of integrating fresh foods into diets. Javdani notes that international food markets like Balboa Market play a crucial role in addressing this issue by offering diverse, high-quality, and affordable ingredients that align with healthier eating habits.

At Balboa Market, Javdani prioritizes sourcing fresh produce, whole grains, and minimally processed international foods that cater to San Diego's diverse population. He also emphasizes consumer education. "We want our customers to make informed choices. That's why we provide not only the ingredients but also the knowledge—recipes, cooking tips, and nutritional information—so people can integrate fresh foods into their diets," he explains.

Javdani calls for policy changes and community initiatives to address food access disparities. "We need more funding for small markets and local producers to bring fresh, affordable foods to underserved communities. It's not just about health—it's about equity and giving everyone the chance to enjoy culturally meaningful, high-quality meals," he states.

He encourages consumers to adopt a balanced approach. "Completely avoiding processed foods isn't realistic for most people. Instead, we should focus on reducing harmful UPFs and replacing them with nutrient-dense options when possible," says Javdani.

By advocating for better access to fresh foods and supporting informed consumer choices, Javdani hopes to create a more inclusive and health-conscious food ecosystem. "Everyone deserves the opportunity to eat well and live well," he adds.

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