

# The Avocado Oil Scam

By Robert Ferguson

Avocado oil for many reasons is one of the healthiest oils you can use. It's great for cooking, adding to salads, or even for skincare. But did you know that not all avocado oils in grocery stores are real? That's right! Some bottles may not be pure avocado oil at all.

## What's the Problem?

Scientists from several universities tested avocado oils sold in grocery stores. They found that a **large percentage of the avocado oil was not pure**. Some oils were mixed with cheaper oils like soybean or canola oil. Others were old and had gone bad before being bottled. A study from UC Davis revealed that **70% of private-label avocado oils were either rancid or mixed with other oils**. This means that most avocado oils on the market are not what they claim to be. That's not what you want when you're paying for something labeled as avocado oil!

Right now, there are **no rules or standards** in place to ensure avocado oil is pure and high-quality. Extra virgin olive oil, on the other hand, has strict standards to protect customers from buying fake or low-quality oil. Sadly, avocado oil doesn't yet have these protections, which means consumers can easily be tricked.

## Why Aren't There Standards for Avocado Oil?

Unlike olive oil, avocado oil is relatively new in the global market. Establishing standards takes time, resources, and collaboration between governments, producers, and scientists. The lack of regulations leaves room for dishonest practices, such as mixing avocado oil with cheaper oils or selling low-quality products. Without standards, companies can label their products however they want, which makes it hard for consumers to know what they're really getting.

## Why "Extra Virgin" Matters

Until clear standards are in place, one of the best ways to ensure you're getting quality avocado oil is to choose brands that clearly label their product as **"extra virgin avocado oil."**

- **What does "extra virgin" mean?** For olive oil, "extra virgin" signifies the oil is made from the first cold pressing of the fruit, without chemicals or heat. For avocado oil, while official standards aren't yet established, "extra virgin" usually means minimal processing, fresher oil, and higher nutrient content.
- **Why avoid brands without this label?** Brands that don't list "extra virgin"—even well-known ones like Primal Kitchen—might be selling refined oils. Refining can strip the oil of nutrients and

flavor. While their products may still be acceptable, the lack of transparency makes it harder to trust the quality and purity of the oil.

## Why I Recommend Avoiding Most Avocado Oils

So, for these reasons—and we will explore more as you read on—I do not encourage my clients to buy or use avocado oil unless they see the words **“Extra Virgin Avocado Oil.”** Without the words “Extra Virgin” preceding avocado oil, avoid it. Even somewhat reputable brands like Primal Kitchen, which uses avocado oil in many of its products, is something I would not buy.

A red flag is a red flag, and I can’t stress it enough: if you don’t see “Extra Virgin,” until efficacy standards are in place, choose otherwise. And don’t be fooled by labels that highlight “Cold Pressed.” Simply seeing “Cold Pressed” does not mean all the oil is indeed cold pressed. When an oil is labeled “Extra Virgin,” it automatically means it is “Cold Pressed.”

## A Better Future for Avocado Oil

The good news is that changes are coming. By the end of **2025**, experts plan to establish new rules and standards for avocado oil, much like the standards for extra virgin olive oil. These rules will:

- Stop companies from mixing avocado oil with cheaper oils.
- Ensure the oil is fresh and not spoiled.
- Protect consumers from being tricked by misleading labels.

This means that, in the future, you’ll have more confidence that the avocado oil you’re buying is exactly what’s advertised.

## How to Choose the Best Avocado Oil Today

Until these standards are in place, here are some tips to help you avoid being bamboozled:

1. **Look for “Extra Virgin Avocado Oil”:** Oils with this label are more likely to be pure and minimally processed. Avoid brands that don’t clearly label their products as extra virgin.
2. **Check the Label Carefully:** Read the ingredients list, and if you don’t see “extra virgin avocado oil,” avoid it. Sometimes the label may say “Extra Virgin Avocado Oil,” but the ingredients list will only mention “avocado oil,” which is a red flag.
3. **Buy From Trusted Brands:** Stick to companies that disclose how their oil is sourced and processed. Transparency builds trust and ensures better quality.
4. **Look for Certifications:** Labels like “non-GMO” or “cold-pressed” can signal better quality. However, none of these certifications matter if “extra virgin avocado oil” is not listed in the ingredients.
5. **Smell and Taste the Oil:** Fresh avocado oil should have a mild, nutty smell. If it smells rancid or tastes bad, it’s likely not good quality.

## Why This Matters

When you buy avocado oil, you're making a choice for your health. It's unfair for companies to sell fake or bad oil, especially when people are trying to eat healthier. Without standards, it's up to you to be cautious and informed. Until the new rules are in place, choosing oils labeled as "extra virgin" is one of the best ways to ensure you're getting a high-quality product.

With these tips, you can make smarter choices and enjoy all the benefits of avocado oil without worrying about being tricked. And soon, with new standards coming, shopping for avocado oil will be easier and more trustworthy than ever.

## References

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