

## **FSSAI's proposed colour-coded labelling will help in easy identification of unhealthy foods**

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**E-Paper**

Red-colour coding on the product labels and front-of-the pack labelling are key proposals

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has said that the draft labelling regulations proposed by the Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) will enable consumers identify unhealthy foods high in fats, sugar or salt.

The FSSAI, which released the draft for public consultation last month, proposes to make it mandatory for packaged food companies to declare the quantity of salt, added sugar, saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol on their labels. Red-colour coding on the product labels if salt, sugar and saturated fat content is beyond a certain threshold level and front-of-the pack labelling are other key proposals in the draft regulations.



In a statement, CSE Director-General Sunita Narain said: “This is a big step, which will enable people identify unhealthy foods that are high in fats, sugar or salt. It should help to contain the growing incidence of obesity and non-communicable diseases.”

The proposed front-of-the-pack label will depict information on number of calories and the quantity of salt, added sugar and fats per serving.

### **Mandatory content labelling**

The label will also include how much of the RDA (recommended dietary allowance) is exhausted by eating one serving of the food.

The CSE said that mandatory salt, sugar and fat content labelling will be the key at a time when diabetes and hypertension are household phenomenon. “Red-coloured warning symbol is a very powerful approach to help consumers identify junk food. It is a much needed intervention for India as it will help overcome literacy and language barriers,” added Amit Khurana, Programme Director, Food Safety and Toxins, CSE

The NGO has also recommended that front-of-the pack labels should reflect total sugar instead of added sugar and total fats instead of saturated fats. It also said that the serving size should be standardised for effective implementation of these norms.

This comes at a time when several players in the packaged food sector and industry associations have expressed concerns regarding the implementation of the proposed labelling regulations.