

Spot testing for adulteration to be possible; FSSAI to develop RAFT kit

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Soon on-the-spot testing of foods such as mawa for adulteration will be possible with FSSAI embarking on a plan to develop RAFT or Spot Testing Kits.

Apart from helping the consumer in getting results of tests on the spot, the Rapid Analytical Food Testing (RAFT) kits will enable lighten the testing load on Food Safety Officers (FSOs) and laboratories by giving test results quickly.

In this regard, FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) has invited applications from entrepreneurs under its programme of developing RAFT Kit / Equipment / Method for the purpose of testing food.

The apex food regulator has issued guidelines for the same, detailing the pro forma for filing the application. FSSAI has in a notice stated that the manufacturers and method developers may apply to the regulator, in the prescribed format.

The notice says that applicants should submit separate application for each kit, equipment or method and each application should be accompanied by separate application processing fee.

FSSAI has said that the applicants, along with the application, should also produce proper justification for each product category of RAFT kit along with validation certificates while no application for general parameters like pH, density or routine laboratory equipment and accessories and so on will be accepted.

Speaking about the RAFT kit, Milind Deshpande, Assistant Commissioner (Food), FDA, Nagpur, Maharashtra, said, "It is also called as Spot Testing Kit and this kit will enable Food Safety Officers as well as laboratories to get results quickly. Besides, it would help in establishing food safety for the ordinary consumer as validated results of tests conducted on various categories of food products such as milk and edible oils, among others will be available readily, which often are time-consuming."

He added that, for example, during festivals, the most common victim of adulteration is khoya or mawa, because of high demand, people often engage in such spurious activities. But with the help of RAFT kit, it can be ascertained very quickly on the spot, that if the mawa is adulterated or not.