

DGFT extends ban on import of Chinese milk, milk products with melamine

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The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, has further extended the ban on import of milk and milk products from China, including chocolate and chocolate products, which were found to be contaminated with melamine, a chemical compound physically added to increase their protein content, by a period four months, i e until April 23, 2019. The last ban expired on December 23, 2018.

At a meeting which took place at the FSSAI headquarters in New Delhi recently, the concerned department and ministries of the government recommended that the ban be extended by another four months. The ban was extended from time to time, with the last being notified on June 22, 2018 for a period of six months.

The official communique issued by the government said, "The ban on import of milk and milk products, including chocolates and chocolate products and candies/confectionery/food preparations, with milk and milk solids as ingredients from China, may be extended for a period of four months, i e April 23, 2019, until the capacity of all notified laboratories at ports of entry across India has been suitably upgraded for testing melamine or until further orders in this context, whichever is earlier."

An FSSAI official said, "The ban has been extended keeping in mind the food and milk safety. Representatives from the animal husbandry department, the Department of Customs and the commerce ministry were present at the meeting. They were of the opinion that the milk that came from China was still contaminated with melamine content."

"Earlier also, extensions were imposed as an interim step to enable suitable measures to restrict imposed of contaminated milk products in the country, but no representation were received from Chinese counterparts. We are reconsidering the issue, so the ban has been extended by four months," he added.