

Business Standard

FSSAI plans colour-coded label for packaged food products with high fat, sugar, salt

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Packaged food companies will be required to label high fat, sugar and salt content levels on the front side of the package with "red-colour-coding" as per the draft regulations proposed by food regulator FSSAI.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said that its new 'Labelling and Display' regulations is ready for draft notification. These regulations will supersede the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011.

"The idea behind the new labelling regulations is to enable citizens to know more about the composition of food products, so that they can make informed choices," FSSAI said in a statement.

According to the proposed draft Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, the packaged food companies will need to declare nutritional information such as calories (energy), saturated fat, trans-fat, added sugar and sodium per serve on the front of the pack.

The food companies would have to declare, per serve percentage contribution to RDA (recommended dietary allowance) on the front of the pack.

FSSAI said the new regulations also propose to make it "mandatory to display red colour-coding on front-of-the-pack labels on packaged food products that have high-fat, high-sugar and high-salt content levels."

This requirement would be implemented in phased manner for a period of three years.

FSSAI has invited suggestions and objections from stakeholders within 30 days from the publication of the draft regulations. Several main issues raised by the industry association particularly with front-of-the-pack labelling would also be considered at the time of finalisation of these regulations.

"In present time, the industry practice is to put manufacturing date and expiry date at two different places over the pack and it became difficult for consumer to see both at a glance.

Hence, the new regulations propose that Date Marking including date of manufacturing and date of expiry must be at one place," the statement said.

The regulator noted that food labelling serves as a primary link of communication between the manufacturer and consumer and covers both food safety and information of consumer interest.

To make the national labelling regulations more robust and effective, FSSAI is in the process of comprehensive revision of Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011 with the objective of having three different regulations dealing separately to packaging, labelling and advertisement & claims requirements.

Two regulations namely FSS (Packaging) Regulations and FSS (Advertising and Claims) Regulations have been finalised and notified in the year 2018.

Now the FSSAI has readied 'Labelling and Display' regulations for draft notification.

The other features of new regulations are -- mandatory labelling requirements like information relating to allergens and logo of veg, non-veg food etc for the prepared food as well; new logo for vegetarian food and every package of food material which is not meant for human consumption shall bear a [X] symbol so as to clearly distinguish the non-food grade items to food items.