

FSSAI provides relief to craft breweries on yeast content

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BENGALURU: The Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said it will allow craft breweries to continue making beer with higher yeast content. This will come as a huge relief to micro breweries across the country.

The regulator had said that regular beer or lager should be free of yeast while draught beer should have yeast content of at most 40 CFU (colony-forming units).

The notification had not put craft beer into a separate category, which had put the breweries in a tizzy as many craft beers have yeast content as high as 3 million CFU. "The Food Safety & Standards (Alcoholic Beverages) Regulations, 2018 will be implemented in effect from 1st April 2019, except the parameter for yeast in various categories of beer," the regulator said in a notification on Friday.

The Craft Brewers Association of India (CBAI) had made a representation earlier this month that it was difficult to operate under the limits ordered by the regulator and wanted a clarification whether yeast was being classified as a contaminant or a raw material, one that is a basic ingredient in beer.

As part of the notification, the FSSAI also clarified that it will provide drinks makers another six months for use of old unused labels and printed cans. Following a directive last year, all liquor bottles were supposed to carry cautionary messages of "Drinking is injurious to health" and "Don't Drink and Drive" on their labels from April 1. "Alcoholic beverages manufactured prior to 1st April 2019 can be sold in the market up to 31st March 2020," FSSAI said.