

## **FBOs told to finish 6 monthly testing of foods in 2 months post-lockdown**

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The apex food regulator of the country, FSSAI, has issued a direction for submission of the six-monthly testing report of food products due to the prevailing situation caused by Covid-19 pandemic. They have been directed to complete the six monthly testing within two months post-lockdown period is over.

FSSAI's order states, "Considering the difficulties faced by food business operators, in six monthly testing of food products and maintenance of records, it has been decided that FBOs shall not be penalised if they have not maintained such record during the lockdown period".

The order, however, added that all FBOs have to ensure the said compliance within two months after lockdown is over. The direction also urged the commissioners of food safety across the country to take note of this direction and ensure compliance.

According to a senior official with the FSSAI, various FBOs individually and associations have given representation seeking relaxation in the compliance with the filing of the six monthly testing report of food products as required under Clause 12 of the conditions of licence in Annexure 3, Schedule 2 of the FSS (Licensing and Registration of Food Business) Regulations, 2011.

Previously in April, the apex food regulator had decided to extend the timeline for submission of annual returns of FBOs mandated under the FSS Act until July 2020. The annual returns to be submitted to the FSSAI hold information like volume of the product, sale price per unit and exported quantity.

Also the apex food regulator has decided to extend the date for mandatory food safety audit of food businesses under the FSS (Food Safety Auditing) Regulations, 2018. FSSAI, in an order, had stated that the food businesses holding Central licences and falling under high risk category can now complete the mandatory audit by Sept 30, 2020.