

## **FSSAI clarifies food crop importers will need to declare non-GMO status from March 1**

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Through this certificate, exporters will need declare that the imported food crops are of non-GM origin

The Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) on Monday said that from March 1, imported consignments of some of the major food crops will need to be accompanied with the “non-GM cum GM free certificate”.

The regulator clarified that the requirement of this declaration will only be applicable on consignments, which are dispatched from exporting countries, on or after March 1.

Through this certificate, exporters will need declare that the imported food crops are of non-GM origin, does not contain genetically modified organism and is also not genetically modified.

“Adventitious presence”

The food safety authority also stated that the tolerance limit for “adventitious presence” of GMOs at one percent will be permissible in these imported food crops consignments. The

term adventitious presence refers to unintentional or incidental presence of trace amounts of GM material in non-GM crops.

Many countries have set thresholds for labeling of “adventitious presence” of approved GM material in non-GM crops, which ranges from 0.9-5 per cent.

In a bid to ensure that only non-GM food crops come into the country, FSSAI in August last year, had first prescribed these norms for importers of 24 food crops such as apple, eggplant, maize, wheat , melon, pineapple, papaya, plum, potato, rice, soyabean, sugarcane, tomato among others.

It had earlier said these norms will become effective January 1. However, an extension of two months was given to importers and the norms will come into force from March 1.