

FSSAI issues milk FAQs, clarifying topic of frozen desserts, ice cream

Wednesday, 22 May, 2019

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The apex food regulator has issued FAQs (frequently-asked questions) regarding milk and milk products, in which it has clarified on the subject of frozen desserts and ice cream, amongst others, saying both food products are permitted under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and regulations, 2011, thereunder.

FSSAI said that the standards for ice cream and frozen desserts are prescribed in Sub-regulation 2.1.14 and Sub-regulation 2.1.15, respectively, of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011.

“These standards prescribe the quality and safety parameters of these products so as to ensure the safety of the consumer. Both the products contain milk solids and other necessary ingredients as per the prescribed standards,” the regulator added.

“The only difference between frozen dessert and ice cream is that frozen desserts use vegetable fat (referred to as edible vegetable oil/palm oil in the labelling) in place of milk fat,” it stated.

Frozen desserts or frozen confections mean the products obtained by freezing a pasteurised mix prepared with edible vegetable oils or fats or vegetable protein products, or both. It may also contain milk fat and other milk solids with the addition of nutritive sweeteners and other permitted non-dairy ingredients. The said product may contain incorporated air and may be frozen hard or frozen to a soft consistency.

And ice cream means frozen milk product obtained by freezing a pasteurised mix prepared from milk or other products derived from milk, or both, with or without the addition of nutritive sweeteners and other permitted non-dairy ingredients. The said product may contain incorporated air and shall be frozen hard, except in case of softy ice cream, where it can be frozen to a soft consistency.

The matter came to the fore as reports surfaced in some parts of the country about the state food safety officials launching a drive against frozen desserts, particularly in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

However later, the Indian Ice Cream Manufacturers’ Association aggressively opposed such

move referring the Food Safety and Standards Act and regulations prescribing the standards for frozen desserts.

FSSAI also clarified what the consumers should see on the labels.

The regulator stated that it was difficult to differentiate frozen dessert from ice-cream because of the similar texture and taste. Both the products have standards as per Food Safety and Standards Regulations, 2011. As per the regulations, frozen dessert shall indicate on the label:

“Contains % Milk Fat* Edible Vegetable Oil* and Vegetable Fat* and Vegetable Protein Product” (*strike out whatever is not applicable).”

“The consumer must check this information on the label to identify/differentiate these products and the name of the product as frozen dessert or frozen confection,” stated FSSAI.