

FSSAI lists out minor labelling defects to be rectified sans adjudication

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued a list of labelling defects deemed as minor or insignificant in nature to allow food business operators to rectify them and continue their business without any adjudication.

The FSSAI has also asked state governments to issue necessary instructions to state designated officers and food safety officers to deal with minor labelling defect cases under Section 32 of the FSS Act wherein a notice needs to be served to the FBO for correction and rectification in the labelling.

This decision was taken with respect to a previous decision by the FSSAI, wherein it asked the state governments to act according to the Section 32 of the FSS Act in case of minor labelling errors.

According to Sanjeev Kumar, deputy director, RCD, FSSAI, previously the FSSAI issued a letter in July 2018 in which state governments were advised to not to initiate adjudication against minor defect in labelling, instead serve them improvement notice under Section 32 of the FSS Act.

“Resorting to adjudication proceedings in such cases not only causes avoidable harassment of the FBOs but also is a waste of scarce resources of enforcement machinery of the state, which otherwise could be utilised more meaningfully elsewhere to ensure safe and nutritious food to the citizen,” said Kumar.

The list of labelling defects categorised into exception (minor labelling defects of insignificant nature and without any food safety concern) and mandatory cases (against which adjudication action would be taken).

The defects that were identified as minor in nature include ‘deviation in the display format of FSSAI licence logo’ wherein all categories of food products were treated as exception, second was ‘improper printing like printing over sealed edge’ and here only small-scale sweets, savouries units selling products in packets for immediate consumption were marked as exception.

Third defect was ‘list of ingredients not displayed on label’ wherein single ingredient food & small-scale sweets, savouries units selling in packets for immediate consumption were marked in the exception categories while all compound ingredients food were listed in

mandatory cases category.

Fourth defect was 'lot/batch code no. not displayed on label' and similarly the small-scale sweet and savouries units along with repacking by the departmental stores and retail outlets were listed in exempted category while nutraceuticals and all other food were listed in the mandatory category.

Fifth defect was 'nutritional facts not displayed on label' wherein single ingredient food and small-scale sweets and savouries were put in the exception category while nutraceuticals, biscuits, dietary supplements, milk and milk products other than sweets were put in the mandatory category.

Sixth defect was related to 'non compliance in respect of capital letters/mentioned in box/font size but the content is in compliance. Here all the categories of food products were put in the exception list.

And seventh defect was related to 'veg and non-veg logo.' For this edible vegetable oil and small-scale sweet and savouries units were put in exception categories while for ghee, vanaspati, nutraceuticals, bakery items and ice creams were put in the mandatory category.