

FSSAI prescribes new labelling rules for honey

Tuesday, 07 July, 2020

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has issued a notice for operationalisation of draft, Food Safety and Standards, Food Products Standards and Food Additives – Amendment Regulations 2020 with respect to the revision of the standards for honey.

The amendment states that under the FSS –Food Product and Food Additive –Regulations 2011, in regulations 2.8 relating to sweetening agents including honey, in the sub regulations 2.8.3 related to honey and its product, definitions were added for Blossom Honey or Nectar Honey as the honey which comes from nectars of plant and Honeydew Honey as the honey which comes mainly from excretion of plant sucking insects- (hemiptera) on the living parts of plants or secretion of living parts of plant.

Amongst other the amendment seeks to prescribe new labelling norms for honey. According to the amendment, the honey shall be labelled as –

- A. Honeydew Honey
- B. Blend of Honeydew Honey and Blossom Honey
- C. CarviaCallosa Honey, if the honey is derived from the flower of carviacallosa plant which is described as thixotropic and is gel like, extremely viscous when standing still and turns into liquid when agitated or stirred.

Further, if the honey is obtained by pressing broodless combs, the honey shall be labelled as 'Pressed Honey'. Also, honey may be labelled according to the floral or plant source like monofloral or multi floral honey based on the total pollen content.

Citing the adulteration in honey amongst other trading issues, FSSAI has stated that the decision was taken to operationalise these regulations which will also supersede the previous directions for honey standards and testing methods related to honey. According to the FSSAI the amendment regulations in this regard and also including some other revisions of the standards of honey are in the process of being notified.

Since, the finalisation of these regulations are likely to take some time, and meanwhile to address the trade issues particularly on adulteration, it has been decided to operationalise these amendment regulations with immediate effect.

The amendment also prescribes 17 parameters under item (V) of the said regulations like specific gravity, moisture percent by mass foreign oligosaccharides, electrical conductivity etc., used for testing of honey for its purity. However this provision related to item -V, shall come into force after six months.