

FSSAI introduces voluntary logo for trans-fat-free claim made by FBOs

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FSSAI has launched a logo for trans-fat-free claim made by FBOs (food business operators), which it stated was voluntary. The logo for trans-fat-free can be displayed by the FBOs at their outlets and on food products, but they need to comply with the requirements specified in the Food Safety and Standards (Advertisement and Claims) Regulations, 2018, which said that the food products did not have trans-fat more than 0.2g/100g.

The apex food regulator has, in this regard, issued an advisory for the FBOs. It said, “Food establishments like bakeries, sweet shops and other food outlets are encouraged to use healthier fat/oil options, thereby reducing the use of trans-fat content in the food.”

“The food establishments which uses trans-fat-free fats/oil, and do not have industrial trans-fat more than 0.2g per 100g of the food , in compliance with the regulations on claims and advertisements can display the trans-fat-free logo in their outlets and on their food products,” he added.

FSSAI has also specified the specification for the logo as well.

Shobhit Jain, executive director, compliance strategy, FSSAI, said in the advisory, that industrial trans-fats were toxic compounds that were related to the cardiovascular and other diseases.

“They are formed during the hydrogenation of the vegetable oil and other processes such as heating of oil at high temperature. Industrial trans-fats are largely present in partially-hydrogenated fats, such as margarine and bakery shortenings, and in vanaspati (which is used in the sweet segment).

“India is committed to eliminate the industrial trans-fat in fats/oils and in food containing fats/oils in a phased manner. The trans-fat content in fats and oil has been reduced to five per cent, and notification to further reduce it to three per cent by 2021, and to two per cent by 2022 is under process. The regulation is also being extended to food products having fats

and oils,” said Jain.

He added, “The Food Safety and Standards Regulations, 2011, on advertisement and claims were notified in November 2018. They specify that trans-fat-free claims can be made on the foods which contain 0.2g trans-fat per 100g or 100ml.”

Ashwin Bhadri, chief executive officer, Equinox Labs, said, “The substantial initiative by FSSAI of creating a logo for trans-fats was long over-due. It will spread awareness about the same in Indian market merely by displaying it at premises.”

“The logo will question customers about its presence and will help spread its importance. The trans-fat-free logo will eventually be popular and will ensure FBOs to follow the said standards, i.e., 0.2g trans-fat per 100g/100ml. A logo despite being minute in size has power to enlighten the masses, as consumers start recognising a product with the logo itself,” he added.

“Trans-fats are considered to be the worst type of fats one can consume. A diet-laden with trans-fat increases the risk of heart diseases and decreases good cholesterol in the human body. The manufactured form of trans-fat, known as partially-hydrogenated oil, is found in a variety of food products, including baked goods, snacks, fried foods, creamers, and margarine,” Bhadri said.

He added that while a majority of consumers find it difficult to choose products that are fat-free, this new logo shall benefit them and help avoid unnecessary health issues.