



PROCESSED  
**Food**  
INDUSTRY

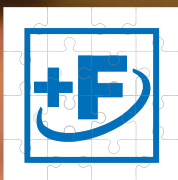
**Fortifying Health**  
FSSAI's Eat Right India  
movement aims for  
'Malnutrition-Free India'

**Initiatives of Large  
Players in Processed  
Food During Pandemic**

**Emerging Trends and  
Responsibilities of Food  
Product Developers**

**Biopolymers as  
Packaging Material in  
Food Industry**





# Fortifying Health

FSSAI's Eat Right India movement aims for 'Malnutrition-Free India'

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has put in place robust regulatory standards for food fortification to reduce micronutrient deficiencies and fulfill its mandate of building a healthy future for the country, explains **Arun Singhal**.

The author is the CEO of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), New Delhi

**“It is health that is real and not pieces of gold” – Mahatma Gandhi**

**E**ATING well is the first step to enable our bodies to function optimally. A balanced diet that is safe and hygienic is the key to wholesome health, longevity, and human beings' overall wellbeing.

FSSAI is leading the Eat Right India movement, a collective action of all stakeholders in the food sector to transform India's food ecosystem. This movement is focused on three key themes - Eat Safe, Eat Healthy and Eat Sustainable to improve the health of the people and the planet. This movement is aligned with the Government's flagship public health programmes such as Poshan Abhiyaan, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, and Swachh Bharat Mission.

Eat Healthy's critical component is a large-scale fortification of food to address widespread micronutrient deficiencies in the country. For this, FSSAI has taken various steps to promote it in Government safety net programmes and the open market.

FSSAI has brought into force regulations for fortification of food as a rallying point for all stakeholders to take it forward, spearheaded advocacy efforts within Government Ministries and departments, introduced measures for quality control of fortified foods such as testing of fortificants, training and capacity building of food businesses and testing and regulatory staff and promoted the health benefits of fortified foods among consumers through large-scale social and behavior change campaigns.

## **Key Achievements of Fortification Regulations**

■ After operationalising the Food Fortification Regulations in 2016, FSSAI gazette notified the Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Regulation on 2nd August 2018 for five essential staples like oil and milk (with Vitamin A and D), wheat flour and rice (with iron, folic acid and vitamin B 12), and double fortified salt (with iodine and iron). The +F logo was released as a unique identification for fortified products.



■ Presently, 157 brands of five fortified staples are available in the open market with a pan India and regional presence.

■ There has been tremendous traction in the oil and milk industry, with 47 percent of the top ten players of the packaged refined edible oil industry and 36.6 percent of the organized milk industry fortifying as per FSSAI standards.

■ FSSAI is now moving towards mandatory fortification of milk and oil.

### Government Food Safety Net Programmes

Various ministries such as Women and Child Development; Human Resource Development (Department of Education and Literacy), Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution have issued directives and advisories for mandatory fortification of these five staples.

Various states have adopted fortification of several commodities across the government safety net programmes (SNP), namely ICDS, MDM, and PDS.

Endorsement for +F logo has been done through FOSCOS licensing and registration system along.

For quality control, SOPs for premix suppliers and Fortified Rice Kernel (FRK) manufacturers have been introduced.

### Training and Capacity Building

FSSAI provides online training to

Food Safety Officers (FSOs) and Food Business Operators (FBOs) on the process of food fortification across commodities. Recently, 48 FSSAI-notified NABL lab personnel have been trained on testing micro-nutrients in oil, milk, wheat flour, and sensitisation workshops for 127 store in-charges of KendriyaBhandar.

Apart from these initiatives, FSSAI has set up the first fortified food store on e-retail and a separate category of fortified staples on the Amazon website.

### Resources

For consumer awareness, a TVC called, "Dekha Kya +F?", starring SakshiTanwar, actress has been launched and aired nationwide. Several short videos for public awareness have been created for all five commodities.

In her words, Ms. SakshiTanwar, famous television actor and household name says "Take responsibility of your health and diet. Just remember to read the +F sign whenever you pick up atta, rice, oil, milk and salt. So I will come and ask you Dekha Kya, +F?"

### Conclusion

The food fortification programme launched by FSSAI assumes significance against the backdrop of the increasing burden of widespread deficiencies of vitamins and minerals as

a complementary strategy to dietary diversification and nutrient supplementation.

"Milk and oil fortification has gained considerable traction in the open market which led to the decision of mandatory fortification of both the commodities in the near future. The dosages for fortification have been issued; quality assurance parameters and laboratories for testing of these commodities have been identified. There are provisions for capacity building of the FBOs who are engaged in the process of fortification. A dedicated resource centre is available to extend end-end technical support. With all these provisions in place, we believe that smoother implementation across the country can be seen in the coming months".

This programme is a crucial tool to bring a change through a judicious mix of regulatory measures, combined with soft interventions for ensuring awareness and capacity building of food businesses and citizens alike. It aims to sensitise stakeholders and people to address malnutrition and intensify the campaign towards a 'Malnutrition-Free India'. As a part of the Eat Right India movement, it empowers citizens to consume safe and nutritious food to prevent diseases and lead healthy and happy lives. □



Eat Healthy's critical component is a large-scale fortification of food to address widespread micronutrient. FSSAI has taken various steps to promote it. FSSAI has brought into force regulations for fortification of food as a rallying point for all stakeholders to take it forward