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FSSAI’s New Move: Restricting Registration for Key Food Products to Boost Safety

AUTHOR Nidhi Singh, Rahul Sundaram

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On May 1, 2025, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) took a significant step towards enhancing regulatory compliance in the food industry by issuing a consultation paper. This paper proposes the restriction of the registration facility for certain food products and categories, aiming to ensure the safety and quality of these products in the market. The move comes after a series of notifications and orders that have shaped the regulatory framework for food business operators (FBOs) in recent years.

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Background of the Proposal

The journey towards this proposal began on October 17, 2024, when FSSAI issued a Gazette Notification omitting the mandatory BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) Certification for certain food products. These products included infant nutrition foods, condensed milk, milk powder, packaged drinking water, and mineral water. Subsequently, on November 29, 2024, FSSAI classified packaged drinking water and mineral water under 'High Risk Food Categories' and mandated pre-license/pre-registration inspection for these manufacturers and processors. Additionally, as per the RBIS order dated May 2, 2022, annual inspections and third-party audits were made mandatory for high-risk category manufacturers and centrally licensed manufacturers.

Current Norms and Regulations

Currently, Food Business Operators (FBOs) manufacturing the specified products are eligible for either FSSAI Registration or FSSAI License (State/Central), depending on their eligibility. Registration involves fewer compliance obligations compared to Licensing. For instance, registered FBOs are not required to conduct mandatory product analysis, especially for safety parameters, and upload test reports on the FoSCoS portal every six months. They are also exempt from filing annual returns and do not need qualified technical personnel to supervise the production process. Moreover, there is no mandatory annual third-party audit for registered FBOs, and they only need to comply with basic hygiene and sanitary standards.

However, registered FBOs may lack the technical, financial, and infrastructural capabilities to ensure safe production, especially for technically demanding products like infant foods and packaged drinking water. This gap in capabilities has prompted FSSAI to propose stricter regulations.

Proposal for Restriction of Registration Facility

The consultation paper proposes that no new registrations and renewals of existing registrations will be allowed for manufacturing certain specified food products. Only State or Central Licenses will be permitted for these products. The categories affected include sweetened condensed milk, milk powders and cream powder, infant formulae and follow-up formulae, complementary foods for infants and young children, packaged drinking water, mineral water, and non-carbonated water-based beverages.

As of March 31, 2025, the active registrations for these categories are as follows: 935 for sweetened condensed milk, 885 for milk powders and cream powder, 1263 for infant formulae and follow-up formulae, 2451 for complementary foods for infants and young children, 1931 for packaged drinking water, 2444 for mineral water, and 1984 for non-carbonated water-based beverages.

Transition Plan for Existing Registered FBOs

To enable the transition, FSSAI will initiate a special drive to convert existing registered FBOs to the License category. A reasonable transition period of six months will be provided to allow FBOs to shift to the Licensing category and use existing packaging and labelling materials. After the transition period, modifications in the FoSCoS portal will be made to remove these products from the Registration Certificates (RC) to prevent further manufacturing under RC.

Additionally, pre-license inspection will be mandatory for manufacturers of foods for infant nutrition (Food category 13.1 & 13.2) and non-carbonated water-based beverages (Food category 14.1.4.2). This measure aims to ensure that only qualified and capable manufacturers can produce these critical food products.

Stakeholder Comments and Suggestions

FSSAI is inviting stakeholders to submit their comments and suggestions on the proposal through a Google Form.

The form can be accessed via the following link: [Google Form URL](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeqLyxP_4klSDf3c4nm_rIzeZukYdUcKsIzX8QiaF0dJlOEMg/viewform?usp=dialog) or the short URL: https://forms.gle/JxiV1dsSz5BBd6uNA. Stakeholders are requested to provide their inputs within 30 days from the date of issuance of this notice.

This consultation paper reflects FSSAI's commitment to strengthening regulatory compliance and ensuring the safety and quality of food products in India. By proposing stricter regulations and a transition plan, FSSAI aims to enhance the capabilities of food business operators and protect consumer interests. Stakeholders are encouraged to provide their valuable inputs to shape the future regulatory framework for these critical food categories.

For further details write to contact@indialaw.in

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