



FOOD

India's FSSAI Notifies First Amendment to Food Products and Additives Standards: New Norms Effective February 2026

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In a significant move toward strengthening food safety and standards regulation in India, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) First Amendment Regulations, 2025. The notification was published on July 10, 2025, and the amended regulations will come into effect from February 1, 2026. The amendments have been issued under the powers conferred by Section 16 and clause (e) of sub-section (2) of Section 92 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

The draft of these regulations was initially published on October 31, 2022, inviting public comments and suggestions. After extensive stakeholder consultations and review of the feedback, the final version of the regulations has been formally notified.

One of the key technical changes includes updates to the refractive index values of certain food products at specified temperatures. This modification, aimed at enhancing analytical precision in food quality assessment, revises the standard values in multiple clauses under the existing regulations.

A major addition is the inclusion of a new standard for meat sausages, which provides a comprehensive definition, classification, and compositional criteria for fresh, cooked, smoked, and dry or fermented varieties. The new standard outlines requirements for preparation processes such as mincing, emulsification, stuffing, cooking, and cooling. It also details hygiene, storage, and quality standards, such as minimum meat content, moisture limits, and permissible food additives. These norms aim to bring uniformity to sausage production in India and ensure consumer safety.

In another development, FSSAI has introduced a new standard for dehydrated tarragon, also known as Vilayati Damnak. The regulation prescribes detailed specifications for both whole and powdered forms of the herb, including moisture limits, ash content, oil content, and the absence of contaminants. Notably, it defines acceptable ranges for key volatile compounds and lays down chromatographic requirements, ensuring consistency and purity of this culinary spice.

The amendment also updates regulations for packaged drinking water (excluding mineral water) by revising the permissible packaging sizes. These changes ensure better consumer transparency and alignment with packaging practices in the beverage industry.

A notable shift is seen in the area of food colours. Several safety-related footnotes that required synthetic colours to be free from substances like mercury, chromium, aromatic hydrocarbons, and cyanides have been omitted. This move appears to simplify the regulatory text while aligning with updated scientific evaluations. Furthermore, the section on synthetic food colour preparations has been thoroughly revised to define acceptable diluents and to specify labelling and dye content requirements with strict tolerance ranges.

FSSAI has also made targeted changes to Appendix A, removing steviol glycosides as an approved additive in certain beverage categories. Meanwhile, Appendix C, which governs processing aids, sees a range of updates, including new microbial sources for enzyme production and revised permissible limits for bleaching agents.

In a significant update for the food processing and biotechnology sector, several new enzymes derived from genetically modified microorganisms have been approved for use. These include enzymes used in bakery, pasta production, degumming of oils, egg processing, and cheese manufacturing. All enzyme preparations must conform to stringent microbiological and heavy metal limits to ensure food safety.

This comprehensive amendment reinforces India's commitment to scientific regulation of food standards and consumer protection. It also aligns domestic regulations more closely with international norms and reflects the dynamic needs of a rapidly evolving food industry.

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