



FOOD

Regulatory Developments in Food Product Standards: Draft Amendments Introducing Minor Seed Oils, Edible Seeds, and New Additives for Grape Wines

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has published a draft notification dated 21 May 2026, proposing amendments to the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011. Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part III, Section 4, on 25 May 2026, the draft has been issued in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (e) of sub-section (2) of Section 92 read with Section 16 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and is circulated under sub-section (1) of Section 92 of the said Act. Stakeholders and persons likely to be affected thereby are invited to submit objections or suggestions within 60 days from the date on which copies of the Gazette containing the notification are made available to the public, that is, by approximately 24 July 2026. Comments may be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of the Authority at FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, New Delhi, or transmitted electronically to regulation@fssai.gov.in. The draft regulations shall be considered by the Authority only after the expiry of the said 60-day window.

The first significant amendment proposes the insertion of a new sub-regulation 2.2.10, to be placed after the existing sub-regulation 2.2.9 concerning solvent extracted crude vegetable oils. This new provision, titled Minor Seed Oils, seeks to regulate chilli seed oil, muskmelon seed oil, okra seed oil, and tomato seed oil. The draft mandates that these oils must be obtained from clean, sound, and mature seeds of the specified plants through methods that do not alter the inherent qualities of the oil. The material must be clear and absolutely free from rancidity, adulterants, sediment, suspended and other foreign matter, separated water, added colouring and flavouring substances, and mineral oil. The proposed standards differentiate between cold pressed and virgin oils on one hand and refined oils on the other. For both categories, matter volatile at 105°C and insoluble impurities are capped at 0.2% and 0.05% respectively, while soap content must not exceed 0.005%. The acid value for cold pressed and virgin oils is set at 4.0 mg KOH/g fat, whereas for refined oils it is tightened to 0.6. The maximum permissible iron content is 5.0 mg/kg for cold pressed and virgin oils and 2.5 mg/kg for refined oils, while copper limits are fixed at 0.4 mg/kg and 0.1 mg/kg respectively. The draft further requires that there shall be no turbidity after keeping the filtered sample at 30°C for 24 hours, and the test for argemone oil must yield a negative result. Where the oil is extracted using hexane as a solvent, it must be supplied for human consumption only after refining, and the refined oil must conform to the standard laid down under regulation 2.2.1(16), with a hexane residue limit of 5.0 mg/kg. Oils obtained through the pressed method must be entirely free from hexane. With respect to food additives, the draft permits only refined oils to contain additives listed in Appendix A, while pressed oils are prohibited from carrying any additives. The product must comply with the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011, and must be prepared and handled in accordance with Schedule 4 to the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, as well as any other guidance issued under the parent Act. Labelling must conform to the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020.

The second proposed amendment introduces a new sub-regulation 2.3.66, to be inserted after sub-regulation 2.3.65 relating to colouring foods, under the heading Edible seeds. The provision defines edible seeds for direct human consumption as seeds obtained from vegetables and oilseeds, which may be presented raw, roasted, coated, or salted, and to which sweeteners, spices, condiments, or any other suitable ingredients may be added. The product must be sound, whole, clean, sufficiently dried, uniform in colour, and free from living or dead insects, rancidity, visible foreign matter, visible moulds, rodent contamination, and added colouring. The draft categorises these seeds into edible vegetable seeds, including seeds from watermelon, cucumber, muskmelon, and pumpkin, and edible oilseeds, encompassing sunflower, sesame, and flaxseed. The proposed quality parameters require that moisture content shall not exceed 8.00% by mass, free fatty acid content shall not exceed 1.25% on a dry mass basis, and foreign articles whether inorganic or organic shall not exceed 0.1%.

The third amendment operates within Appendix A under the heading Use of Food Additives in Food Products. In Table 14, against the entries relating to Food Category System 14.2.3 for grape wines, and specifically after the existing entry for mixture of mono and diglycerides of oleic acid, the draft proposes the insertion of potassium polyaspartate bearing INS No. 456 at a recommended maximum level of 100 mg/kg. This addition reflects an evolving regulatory approach toward stabilising agents in alcoholic beverages and aligns the Indian framework with international developments in oenological practices.

The draft Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Amendment Regulations, 2026, represent a deliberate effort by the Authority to fill existing regulatory gaps and to bring novel food categories and additives within the formal ambit of the law. By introducing specific standards for minor seed oils and edible seeds, and by permitting potassium polyaspartate in grape wines, the amendments seek to enhance consumer protection while providing clarity to food business operators. Legal practitioners, food technologists, and industry participants are advised to examine the draft closely and to use the 60-day consultation period to submit well-considered objections or suggestions, ensuring that the final regulations are both scientifically strong and commercially practicable.

Related Practice Areas

Food Safety and Regulatory Compliance