



FOOD

FSSAI Orders Nationwide “Special Festive Drive” to Keep Your Sweets and Milk Products Safe This Season

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The country's food-regulator has fired the starting gun on its biggest pre-festival cleanliness campaign. In a circular marked "MOST URGENT", the Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has asked every State and Union Territory to launch an intensive surveillance-and-enforcement blitz during September-October, the two months when Indians buy more sweets, savouries and dairy delicacies than at any other time of the year.

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Why now?

Come Navaratri, Durga Puja, Dussehra, Karva Chauth and Diwali, demand for ghee-laden laddoos, rosogollas, kaju barfis, paneer gravies and thickened-milk desserts jumps 40-60 %. The price gap between genuine khoya and cheap starch, or between real ghee and vanaspati, widens overnight, tempting unscrupulous operators to cut corners.

What exactly has FSSAI ordered?

1. Micro-target the hot-spots

Commissioners have been told to draw up "heat maps" of sweet-shop clusters, railway stations, bus stands, tourist hubs and fairgrounds that see peak footfall. Teams will carry both rapid-test kits and full laboratory sampling kits.

2. Roll out the "Food-Safety-on-Wheels" clinics

All mobile vans each a mini-lab have been directed to be deployed in prominent markets and/or based on specific intelligence inputs to facilitate on-the-spot testing, strengthen vigilance, create awareness and to boost consumer trust by assuring them of safe and quality food products during the festive season

3. Digitise every swipe, swab and seizure

Inspectors must key the GPS location, photos, label details and test results into the FoSCoS portal (or the regional FoSCoRIS app) the same evening. Data must be complete by 15 November so that FSSAI can release a public score-card before the wedding season begins.

What should you, the consumer, do?

- Buy only packaged and FSSAI-licensed products during the season; loose sweets carry the highest risk.
- Look for the green vegetarian or brown non-veg logo and the 14-digit LIC number.
- Demand a cash-memo it is your first piece of evidence if something goes wrong.
- Use the Food-Safety-on-Wheels van if you spot one; a 5-minute test can save a week of food poisoning.

Timeline at a glance

- 23 Sept 2025 – Circular issued
- 24 Sept–31 Oct – States launch drives & upload daily data
- 15 Nov – Final compliance report due on FoSCoS

In short, the regulator wants to ensure that the only thing rising this festive season is consumer cheer—not the body count from adulterated sweets.

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