

## Potassium bromate to be banned



Cancer-causing chemicals in bread of all top brands, the government is all set to ban “potassium bromate” as food additive.

A day after the report claimed presence of cancer-causing chemicals in bread of all top brands, the government is all set to ban “potassium bromate” as food additive due to its “hazardous effects” on human health.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in their report sent to the Union health ministry has recommended to ban “potassium bromate” a substance that is a known carcinogen.

Union health minister J.P. Nadda had ordered a probe on Monday after the Centre for Science and Environment came up with an alarming study confirming presence of cancerous chemicals in 84 per cent of 38 widely-consumed brands of pre-packaged breads including pizzas, buns, paos, as they tested positive for potassium bromate and potassium iodate.

Known to make the bread white, potassium bromate helps strengthening the dough and enhances its elasticity. However, its linked to causing cancer and was banned by the EU and the UK in 1990, its use has been prohibited in Canada Australia, Bew Zealand, China, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Peru and Colombia.

# FSSAI IN NEWS

Speaking to this newspaper, FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal said that the FSSAI has recommended the health ministry for “removal of potassium bromate from the list of permissible food additives. While, we are still studying the CSE report, once removed from the list and notified it shall be banned from the country”, he said.

The FSSAI allow use of potassium bromate as flour treatment agent in bread and other bakery products. Mr Agarwal clarified that the FSSAI had been studying its effects on human body for long. “The CSE report came as a warning. Earlier, the scientific panel under the FSSAI also had provided scientific evidence that potassium bromate may lead to cancer in occasional cases. Therefore based on enough evidence, in our report sent on Tuesday we have recommended the ministry that potassium bromate should be taken out of the list of essential additives”. The WHO has classified potassium bromate as group 2 B agent-which means its possibly carcinogenic to humans.

The scientific panel under former director of defence food research laboratory had recommended the FSSAI to remove it from the list of permissible food additives as its safe alternatives were available.

“Potassium bromate is one of 11,000 food additives that are allowed in food business. After careful consideration, FSSAI has decided to remove potassium bromate from the list,” he further added.

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