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Breadmakers stop cancer-causing additives' use

Bread manufacturers, hit hard by the CSE warning of cancer-causing elements in samples of bread, on Thursday announced their decision to immediately stop the use of potassium bromate and potassium iodate as additives.

“FSSAI has already said that use of potassium bromate as an additive will be stopped and a notification will be issued within 6-7 days. Hence, we have decided to stop using potassium bromate and potassium iodate voluntarily,” All-India Bread Manufacturers Association president Ramesh Mago said.

The All-India Bread Manufacturers' Association, which represents over 90 organised bread manufacturers such as Harvest Gold and Britannia, however, asked food safety regulator (FSSAI) to verify the findings of the CSE report that claimed most of the breads sold in New Delhi contained cancer-causing chemicals.

The FSSAI has already announced that based on a recommendation of its scientific panel, it will soon notify the removal of potassium bromate and potassium iodate from its list of the additives.

Interestingly, the association claimed that these ingredients are “safe,” but they will be using alternative emulsifiers. “The industry is willing to use other forms of emulsifiers,” the association said.

Adil Hassan, MD of Harvest Gold, and a member of the All-India Bread Manufacturers' Association, said the unorganised baking sector needs to be checked. “The bakers who add potassium bromate mention it on the packaging. The local bakers making buns need to be checked as we are a very small section of the entire industry.”

FSSAI IN NEWS

Mr Hassan admitted that the CSE report had dented the sales of the bread in the past few days.

Centre for Science and Environment director Sunita Narain told this newspaper that all the samples for the survey had been taken from the organised sector, “Our samples were commercially available breads. When we released our findings about the cold drinks, trans fats etc. even then the industries claimed that it is the unorganised sector that needs to be curbed from deviating.”
