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Govt mulls making food fortification mandatory: FSSAI

In order to address malnutrition, government is considering making food fortification - adding of essential micronutrients - mandatory in wheat flour, rice, salt, edible oils and salt.

At the same time, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of [India](#) (FSSAI), which earlier this month issued draft regulation on allowing food fortification, has decided to soon operationalise these standards even before it issues final notification.

FSSAI is organising 2-day summit on fortification of food on October 16-17 in the national capital to draw the roadmap.

"Fortification is a cost effective and quick way to address malnutrition. We have issued a draft regulation on fortification of foods and sought public comments. We will soon operationalise this draft as several states want to start fortification," FSSAI CEO Pawan Agarwal told reporters here .

Fortification means deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients in food to improve its quality. In draft standards, the FSSAI has covered five food categories -- wheat flour, rice, milk, edible oil and salt.

The FSSAI has set standards for fortification of salt with iodine and iron; of vegetable oil and milk with Vitamin A & D; wheat flour and rice with iron, folic acid, zinc, vitamin B12, vitamin A and some other micronutrients.

The draft enlists standards to encourage production and consumption of fortified foods. The rules also provide for FSSAI's role in making fortification mandatory.

Agarwal said the regulator will notify final regulations based on comments from stakeholders, who can sent in their views on the issue by the first week of

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November.

"Option for making food fortification mandatory is being examined," he said, while emphasising on the need for getting supply side ready for this process.

"The government will take a final call," he said, adding that this could be easily implemented in government programmes like PDS, mid-day meal scheme.

Besides operationalising the draft regulations, the FSSAI will also unveil logo for fortified food on Sunday.

"We are setting standards for fortification of foods as our mandate is to provide not only safe but wholesome food. By setting standards, we are prescribing minimum and maximum limit of fortification in the five food categories," he said.
