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## **FSSAI to operationalise draft guidelines, launch logo for fortified food products**

Fortification means deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients such as iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin D, Iodine, etc, in a food product so as to improve its nutritional quality with minimal risk to health.

The Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) will launch the logo for “fortified” food product and operationalise the draft guidelines for food fortification on Monday. Fortification means deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients such as iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin D, Iodine, etc, in a food product so as to improve its nutritional quality with minimal risk to health.

The draft guidelines, which were put in public domain on September 4 to invite comments and suggestions, set the minimum levels of micronutrients which could be added to certain products such as rice, salt, wheat flour, milk and edible oil.

“These operationalised draft guidelines, when launched on Monday, will be for the state governments and some companies which want to work on them as soon as possible,” said Pawan Kumar Agarwal, chief executive officer, Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). He added the final guidelines would be issued only once the 60-day time period for receiving the public comments is over.

“We intend to operationalise the standards at the draft stage itself because several state governments want them to be in place so that it can implement them in their

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schemes quickly. For example, Karnataka is very keen to implement these standards for their mid-day meal schemes,” Agarwal elaborated.

Firms which will fortify its products would be able to use the ‘fortified product’ logo on them. “If someone is using the fortified logo, and if they are not fortifying it as per the prescribed standards, that company would be subjected to same penalty as for manufacturing unsafe or adulterated products. It means there would be consequences for not fortifying it as per standards. If a company is putting the micronutrient in the product, and if it is below the prescribed standard, then it can’t be called fortified at all,” Agarwal said.

If there is any change in the final guidelines, the states would be given a transition time to go from “operationalised” draft guidelines to final guidelines. “It is more than likely that changes, if there are any at the final stage, would be minimal,” said Agarwal.

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