



Dated: 21-05-2016

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## Govt bans food additive used in bread after study found it causes cancer



**The CSE study had found that 84% of 38 commonly available brands of pre-packaged breads, including pav and buns, tested positive for potassium bromate and potassium iodate. (Shutterstock)**

The government on Monday banned use of potassium bromate as a food additive following a study that found its presence in bread caused cancer.

The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), however, has referred potassium iodate -- also claimed to be carcinogenic when used as a food additive -- to a scientific panel.

“FSSAI has banned potassium bromate. A notification has been issued in this regard. As far as potassium iodate is concerned, it has been referred to a scientific panel,” FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal told PTI.

Last month, the regulator had recommended to the health ministry removal of potassium bromate from the list of permissible food additives after a study by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

## FSSAI IN NEWS

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The CSE study had found that 84% of 38 commonly available brands of pre-packaged breads, including pav and buns, tested positive for potassium bromate and potassium iodate. These two food additives are banned in many countries and listed as “hazardous” for public health.

According to CSE, potassium bromate typically increases dough strength, leads to uniform finish to baked products while potassium iodate is a flour treatment agent.

CSE had urged FSSAI to ban the use of potassium bromate and potassium iodate with immediate effect and prevent their routine exposure to Indian population.

After the CSE study, a bread manufacturers’ body had said they will stop using controversial potassium bromate and potassium iodate as additives.

The All India Bread Manufacturers Association, which represents over 90 organised bread manufacturers such as Harvest Gold and Britannia, had asked FSSAI to verify the findings of the CSE report that claimed most of the breads sold in the national capital contained cancer-causing chemicals.

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