



FSSAI issues standardised testing methods for five food product types

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FSSAI has issued approved methods for analysis of various food products. These are the standardised testing methods for five different food product types. They are: methods of detection; analysis and estimation of melamine in milk and milk products; total polar compounds in edible oils and fats, estimation of coumarin content in cinnamon, parameters in sago and detection of acid value in oils and fats.

These methods are standardised and would be helpful in uniform testing methods across India, resulting in non-variable results. The country's apex food regulator said that these methods were approved by the scientific panel on methods of sampling and analysis.

Ashwin Bhadri, chief executive officer, Equinox Labs, explained that it has been a while since the testing methods of these food products were debated.

"These five product types have been in news for a while, and with the new, standardised testing methods, we can look forward to unbiased and unpolluted results across every testing laboratory pan-India," he added.

"These testing methods were quite relevant," Bhadri added, saying, "As mentioned previously, these five product types have been in constant headlines from FSSAI. Their testing standards were not organised, which is why discrepancies were observed."

"With a fixed testing method, it will now benefit testing companies, FSSAI officials and the people of course. Melamine, and its famous 2008 Chinese scandal, has not been forgotten; the chemical gives a presence of higher protein content. With only the common objective of food safety, these highly sensitive food types have been selected as of now. More such standards might soon follow," he added.

FSSAI may also add further product categories and list their testing methods. In the recent past, the regulators issued a notification which included the maximum levels of total polar compounds (TPCs) that should be present and the testing of the edible oils for the same. New inclusion of training for milk and milk products under the Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) programme is another example.

"Each of these contribute to become a major and a positive change in the entire food safety ecosystem," Bhadri said, adding that a standardised testing method across the

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nation will leave no benefit of doubt.

“This means that the reports across varied labs shall carry results that are not hampered by irregular testing methods. This will ultimately ensure that the food served to end consumers is quality and safety-validated, and that they are aware what they are consuming,” he opined.