



## **Packaged atta companies want FSSAI to set up one-point reference system**

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A consortium of packaged atta companies, including ITC Aashirvaad, Rajdhani and Silver Coin, held a press conference recently to demand that FSSAI put a one-point reference system in place to dispel the misinformation regarding packaged food.

Referring to the spurt in videos claiming that packaged atta contains plastic, which have been doing the rounds on social media of late, the companies suggested that the system put in place by the country's apex regulator should be accessible to every consumer, so that he/she can get correct information about packaged food.

Siraj Chaudhry, chairman, Cargill India, said, "It is important that FSSAI is closely working with industry and the consumers. Therefore, it is all the more important that the regulator comes up with some sort of reference point on food products approved by it, where a common man can go easily and find out the truth."

He added that in such a situation, a standard operating procedure should be in place for dispelling such falsehoods.

However, the atta industry claimed that no financial loss was incurred by the companies. It was only a matter of rising trust deficit, despite complying with the norms established by FSSAI.

Hemant Malik, chief executive officer, foods division, ITC, and co-chair, FICCI Food Processing Committee, said, "It is difficult to quantify the loss. There is no upfront data on that as well. But it is a question of misinformation that has led to misunderstanding amongst the consumers."

Meanwhile, the industry representatives, including Ratan Gupta, director, Modern Flour Mill; Dinesh Sanghvi, executive director, Sanghvi Group, Nipun Chopra, director, Laxmi Bhog, and Divya Agarwal, president, Flour Millers' Association, said that atta was made out of wheat grain, and gluten was a natural substance present in wheat and was an essential component of it, without which the flour will not bind after kneading.

There is an FSSAI norm, stating that atta must contain a minimum of six per cent gluten to be called atta, whereas for other products like refined atta, the percentile can go up to nine per cent.