



## **FSSAI gazette notification seals standards for country liquor & whisky**

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FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) has issued a gazette notification with respect to standards for alcoholic beverages. Aiming at the safety of alcoholic beverages, the regulations deal with food safety and labelling requirements in alliance with the FSS Act, 2006, and the Regulations, 2011, thereunder.

According to the apex food regulator, due to presence of various alcoholic beverages and their different requirements with respect to their standards and labelling, these separate regulations for alcoholic beverages were proposed and notified.

The FBOs (Food Business Operators) have been instructed by the regulator to ensure compliance with the standards from April 1, 2019.

The regulations will be called as Food Safety and Standards (Alcoholic Beverages) Regulations, 2018, and the standards specified under them shall apply to distilled and undistilled alcoholic beverages, as per the notification.

In India, number of alcoholic beverages are being manufactured as well as imported for several decades. However, the country lacked a comprehensive law on alcoholic beverages prior to FSS Act, 2006.

As per the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, alcoholic beverages come under the definition of food and the FSS (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011, has the standard for only one alcoholic beverage i.e., toddy under the Clause (1) of the Sub-Regulation 2.10.5 related to Beverages – Alcoholic.

The notification provides the definition specifying the standards for alcoholic beverages namely, brandy, country liquor, gin, rum, vodka and whisky, liqueur or alcoholic cordial, wines and, beer. It also specifies the requirement for labelling of alcoholic beverages.

The labelling requirements include specifications such as declaration of

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alcohol content; standard drink label; not to contain any nutritional information; no health claim; restriction on words 'non-intoxicating' or words implying similar meaning on label of beverage containing more than 0.5 per cent alcohol by volume; wine labelling; allergen warning; and statutory warning.

Alcoholic beverage other than wine which contains less than 10 per cent alcohol shall mention the date, month and year of expiry on the label, in that order and shall precede by the words "Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_" or Use by \_\_\_\_\_."

However, the manufacturer may use the expression "Best before" as optional or additional information.