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E-paper

GM food labelling proposal opposed [Our Special Correspondent](#)

New Delhi: The national food safety authority has proposed labelling to distinguish genetically modified food sold in India from other eatables, months after it told the Supreme Court that GM food was not allowed in the country, activists campaigning against GM crops said on Monday.

The draft labelling regulations proposed by the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) are inconsistent with the authority's affidavit to the court last year, the Coalition for a GM-Free India said.

The FSSAI website had last month published draft regulations that would require all food products containing five per cent of more "genetically engineered" ingredients to display a label. Such labelling is intended to help consumers distinguish between foods that contain GM ingredients and those that do not.

In a letter sent to the FSSAI on Monday, the coalition has asked the authority to delete the provision for labelling GM food.

It has cited an affidavit the FSSAI had furnished in the Supreme Court last year, which said: "The central government has not notified any regulation... in regard to the manufacture, distribution, sale and import of GM foods. Hence, GM foods are not allowed in the country and neither can be regulated till such notification."

The coalition has said the labelling requirement "allows for GM foods to come into the food supply chain and on shop shelves, with a simple labelling proviso being fulfilled, when it is illegal to sell GM foods in the first instance".

An FSSAI official said the draft rules proposing labels on GM foods were part of the authority's efforts to establish standards for food labelling in the country.