

FSSAI's new norms ban using veg oil with more than 25% TPCs for frying

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FSSAI, through a draft notification issued recently, has fixed the Total Polar Compounds (TPCs) for unused vegetable oils / fats at not more than 15%. Further, according to the authority, used vegetable oil/fat having developed TPCs more than 25% shall not be used for frying.

According to the notification, "In the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011, in Regulation 2.3, in Sub-Regulation 2.3.15, after Clause 7, following clause shall be inserted namely:

"8. The Total Polar Compounds in unused/fresh vegetable oil/fat shall not be more than 15%. Used vegetable oil/fat having developed Total Polar Compounds more than 25% shall not be used." Objections or suggestions with regard to the draft can be sent to FSSAI by August 14, 2019.

Several food inspectors have received complaints in recent years regarding the repeated use of cooking oils by FBOs, which prompted FSSAI to take further action in this regard.

Further, to streamline the standards for cooking oils, the regulator observed that the regulations had no particular provisions to limit the use of cooking oils. Also, if the TPC of the oil is higher than 25% then it is considered to be unsafe for human consumption.

Commenting on the new regulations, Anuja Laghate, executive assistant to MD from Muenzer Bharat, said, "The draft notification by FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) is really a good initiative. The guidelines are stringent. The disposal of oil in an unorganised manner by FBOs should be stopped. If we have used the oil 3-4 times, then the same oil cannot be used for frying again because the TPC will be more than 25%. Even if FBOs add fresh oil in the reused oil, the TPC level will definitely come down but then it is not good for health."

She added, "Also, the local vendors do not know where to dispose the reused oil so they end up disposing in drains or sell it. So, we as a company make sure that the reused oil is not entering the food chain again. Our company helps the FBOs to dispose this used cooking oil and convert it into biodiesel."

Throwing further light, Laghate said, “The guidelines may not reach all the FBOs so companies like Muenzer Bharat and others will train the FBOs and we make them understand about the TPC level and the health hazard faced by the people if we reuse the oil for days.”

Meanwhile, Dr K D Yadav, sr VP (technical), AAK Kamani Pvt. Ltd, said, “It is a good move by FSSAI. But the implementation of the move will be a difficult task. If FSSAI wants to implement it, they should come up with an accurate method. Although, there are different test tubes available to check the TPC level of various oils in the market, but one test tube is specifically for that particular oil which is not correct. Pouring down the money, India is net importer of oil/fats.”

He added, “It is a big challenge. The method should be validated. It should not be a big point of dispute and harassment for the industry.”