

FSSAI mulls cattlefeed norms to curb animal food contamination

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Animal feed and fodder are turning out to be a major source of contaminant of foods of animal origin - The Hindu

For now, feed/fodder to conform to BIS standards

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is looking at bringing in standards for animal feed so as to curb contaminants, pesticides and heavy metals finding their way into foods of animal origin through feed and fodder.

Till the time these regulations are finalised, the FSSAI has directed that cattlefeed materials must conform to norms set by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

Six-month breather

“In order to address the issue on an interim basis, it has been decided that commercial feeds/feed materials intended for food producing animals shall comply with the relevant BIS standards and shall not be manufactured, imported, distributed and sold except under the Bureau of Indian Standards certification,” the directive said. Stakeholders have been given six months to comply with the directive, which will come into force in June.

Noting that animal feed and fodder are turning out to be a major source of contaminants of foods of animal origin, it said, “regulatory control to ensure quality and safety of animal feed and silage is urgently needed.”

According to the findings of the National Milk and Quality Survey, 2018, traces of contaminants such as Aflatoxin M1 have been found not just in raw milk supplied by unorganised players but also in processed milk supplied by organised players; feed and fodder are the culprit. The food safety authority had said that the presence of Aflatoxin M1 residues beyond permissible limits in processed milk is a serious concern.

In its action plan for safe and quality milk and milk products, the FSSAI believes that “regulatory values or recommendations through legislation can limit animal exposure through feed ingestion against the presence of residues of mycotoxins in animal-derived products.”

The regulator has also said that it will be putting in systemic efforts to improve animal husbandry practices to address safety and quality concerns over milk.

The FSSAI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries along with the National Dairy Development Board, will work towards enhancing awareness on improved animal husbandry and farm practices among small dairy farmers.