

FSSAI notification prescribes cereal & juice-based fortified food stds

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The apex food regulator, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, has issued a draft notification aiming at fortification of processed foods and regulations thereunder.

The draft is called FSS-Fortification of Foods-Amendment Regulations 2019 and prescribe the standards for fortified processed food made of cereals, bakery products, and fruit juices.

The draft describes fortified processed foods as foods that had been altered from their natural state by industrial processing methods. The same may have fortified staples as raw materials and/or fortified with permitted micronutrients and additives as specified under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011.

It added that fortified processed foods may be prepared from fortified food articles that may be cereals and/or milk, and shall provide 15-30 per cent of the Indian adult RDA (recommended daily allowance) of micronutrient-based on an average calorie intake of 600kcal from processed foods (about one-third of the energy of 2,000 kcal).

Further, the draft stated that food products high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) shall be excluded from the fortified processed foods category.

The draft added that any manufacturer who fortifies any processed food shall ensure that the level of micronutrients in such fortified processed foods does not fall below the minimum level specified in the regulations.

The list of nutrients for cereal and bakery products include iron, folic acid, zinc, Vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, B6 and B12. And for juices, the nutrient list includes Vitamin C.

For fortified breakfast cereals, the regulations prescribed the limit of fat at not more than 12g, trans-fat at not more than one per cent of total energy, not more than 10 per cent of

total energy for added sugar and not more than 0.35g sodium.

It is pertinent to mention here that FSSAI has operationalised the fortification standards for five basic foods, including rice, wheat, edible oil, salt and milk. It was working on the standards for the fortification of processed and packed food for some time, wherein it specified the exact quantity of nutrients required to be present in the food products through fortification.