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State to ensure nutrients in edible oil & milk soon

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PATNA: The state government is working on a plan to ensure that standard nutritious ingredients (vitamins) are added to wheat, edible oil, milk, salt and rice for public health, health department joint secretary in charge of its food safety wing, Kaushal Kishore, said on Thursday. “The plan framework would be ready for implementation by October,” Kishore said, adding that it was being done on the directive of the central women’s and child development ministry and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

The state has around 90 private players in milk processing units in the dairy sector and there are two other units which are engaged in the production of edible oil, Kishore said, adding that Sudha brand of milk has already completed its training provided by another agency in this regard.

Kishore was talking on the sidelines of a workshop organized on ‘Fortification of milk with Vitamin A and D’. The private players in the dairy sector from Patna, Vaishali and Samastipur districts were the participants.

The workshop was organized by the food safety wing of the health department with support from Karnataka Health Promotion Trust (KHPT), which has been assigned the task to organize division level workshops to apprise the private players in the dairy sector and edible oil production of the needful.

Kishore said the addition of nutrients like Vitamin A and Vitamin D would make minor changes in the cost of production of milk anywhere from 3 paise to 10 paise per litre. “The consumer awareness has become high. They can also bear with slight changes in the price of milk,” he also said.

“The addition of nutrients in milk and edible oil can be easily achieved by the adoption and use of new technology. The private players were enlightened about advantages that would accrue to them and also to the consumers through this enabling technology,” he said.

He said if milk processors and edible oil producers adopted the enabling technology, it would break the monopoly of the few in the market and make it competitive, which, in turn, would also give nutritious products to consumers, besides bringing down their prices. The market for such products were assured as they would be used by those running the midday meal (MDM) scheme and the Anganwadi sectors, over and above the general consumer.