

Food safety regulator cracks down on adulterated edible oil

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In order to crack down on adulterated edible oil in India, the country's apex food safety regulator—Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)—commissioned a pan-India survey.

The quality survey was conducted for the first time between August 25 and 27.

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Various hilly as well as difficult terrains, including Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & Diu as well as Andaman (UT), were included in this exercise so as to ensure a holistic sample size across the country.

The samples were drawn from hypermarkets and supermarkets as well as retail and grocery stores and included national and local brands.

“The survey was conducted by the State Food Safety department officials. At least 50 samples were collected from the metro cities—Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata and 6-8 samples each in cities and districts, other than the metros. FSSAI had shared the detailed guidelines and SOPs for conducting the survey as well as procedure of sample collection with the Commissioners of Food Safety in all States/ UTs...” a health ministry statement read.

The final survey results will help identify the key hot spots for the adulteration of edible oil in different parts of the country and will strengthen efforts at the state/UT level to devise

targeted enforcement drives in the next few months. The whole exercise is aimed at ensuring the availability of pure and safe mustard and other varieties of edible oil in the country.

“A comprehensive strategy for testing of these samples through the State Food Testing Laboratories or FSSAI notified food testing labs (including private NABL accredited) to analyze various parameters including Fatty Acid composition as well as adulteration of any other oils or harmful or extraneous substance/ chemical has been developed. The test results are expected in a month’s time,” an FSSAI statement read.