

Gujarat has fallen behind in food fortification: FSSAI

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The CEO of India's food regulator on Tuesday that Gujarat, which had taken a lead in food fortification, has fallen behind other states like Haryana which are implementing it at a faster pace. Food fortification is enrichment of food by adding micro-nutrients to it.

Speaking at an event here, Pawan Agarwal, CEO of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), said, "Gujarat was ahead in the initiative of food fortification. Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) in 2006 (when he was the chief minister of Gujarat) had started edible oil and wheat flour fortification from the state... I want to say that though Gujarat had taken the initiative, it has fallen behind a little."

Agarwal said that the FSSAI was currently running a campaign across the country to overcome micronutrient deficiencies by fortifying five staples, including wheat flour, edible oil, milk, salt and rice. "Haryana and other states are doing the work of food fortification at a faster speed. The competition has become tough for you (Gujarat). The state needs to re-visit the issue of food fortification," he said, adding that "food fortification is a direct and a cheap way to supply micro-nutrients" and fortification of staples will help in addressing the deficiencies of iron, folic acid and other vitamins.

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The FSSAI CEO, however, congratulated Gujarat for being "one of the best performing states" on food safety. "The reputation of food safety administration across the country is not very good to an extent. Compared to other states, the food state administration here in Gujarat is one of the best performing in the country," he said. Agarwal also launched RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil) application at a hotel here.