

## **FSSAI norms on fortification insist on specified micronutrients levels**

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FSSAI has issued draft regulations that aim to strengthen the fortification programme it has launched by directing manufacturers to ensure that declared value of micronutrients on labels adhere to the maximum and minimum levels specified.

The draft norms—Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Amendment Regulations, 2019—state, “Any manufacturer who fortifies any food shall ensure that the declared value of micronutrients on label of such fortified food shall fall within levels (minimum-maximum) specified in Schedule-I during the declared shelf life of products.”

Offering an insight into the new regulations, Ashwin Bhadri, CEO, Equinox Labs, explains that fortification is a process to enrich food products with nutrients that are of utmost importance to human bodies.

“While the manufacturers focus on micronutrients, it is equally important to abide by the minimum requirements stated by the apex body. Also, the added value which shall be seen on the label of the products will give a fair idea to the consumers about the same. This shall retain transparency and avoid illegal issues. Shelf life plays a vital role as the product that is claimed to be fortified with certain limits should remain constant until the end of the duration,” he tells FnB News.

The draft proposes that in Regulation 7 relating to “Packaging and Labelling Requirements” after Sub-Regulation (3), the provision shall be inserted, namely: “Provided that tolerance of +/- 10 per cent of the declared value of micronutrients on the label may be allowed for the purposes of compliance and analysis at any point in time within declared shelf life of the product.”

Bhadri elaborates, “The proposed draft is for fortification of foods in which the term tolerance indicates the limits to which the maximum and minimum deviation is allowed for the declared micronutrients. So, during analysis of a product within its shelf life period, the minimum and maximum deviation of the declared micronutrients on the label can be +/- 10%.”

He adds, “For compliance, we suggest the minimum and maximum level of micronutrients for the fortified foods along with the source of nutrient as per the Fortification of Foods Regulations, 2018.”

The objections or suggestions, in this regard, may be mailed to the apex food regulator on or before Oct 11, 2019.