

‘No-GM’ certificate mandatory for imported food crops from January

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FSSAI issues order on 24 items even as it works on regulations for GM foods
From January 1, 2021, importers of 24 major food crops will have to mandatorily declare that the products are not genetically-modified and that they also have a non-GM origin.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has come out with this order to ensure that only non-GM food crops come into the country.

The 24 food crops include apple, eggplant, maize, wheat, melon, pineapple, papaya, plum, potato, rice, soyabean, sugarbeet, sugarcane, tomato, sweet pepper, squash, flax seed, bean plum, and chicory.

Environmental groups have been complaining that imported foods often contain genetically modified organisms (GMO).

The FSSAI is in the process of framing regulations on GM foods. While a draft regulation on that is under consideration, the latest GM order, in the interim, is expected to tighten safety assessments of imported food crops at ports.

An order released by, the FSSAI said: “It has been decided that every consignment of these imported food crops shall be accompanied with a non-GM-origin-cum-GM-free certificate issued by the competent national authority of the exporting country.”

Importers will need to declare that the product is ‘of non-GM origin, does not contain genetically modified organism, and is also not genetically modified’.

The FSSAI order said this is being done to “ensure that only non-GM food crops are imported into India, pending framing of regulations related to genetically-engineered or modified” food products.