

Mumbai: FDA turns heat on ice-cream units that use edible oil

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Mumbai: The next time you buy an ice cream, it is possible all you may be getting is a frozen dessert, not the real stuff. Last week, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Maharashtra, conducted surprise raids on various ice-cream manufacturing units in Mumbai.

They realised the manufacturers have been using edible oil to make the so-called 'ice-cream' dessert. Frozen dessert is actually a mixture of milk powder, vegetable oil and artificial sweeteners, while ice-cream is made of milk and cream.

Shailesh Adhav, joint commissioner, FDA, said, ahead of summer, they have started a special drive against the sale of frozen dessert being passed off as ice-cream. Several companies are selling 'ice creams' that are actually frozen desserts. The FDA was also tracking manufacturers using edible oil to prepare desserts and ice-cream.

"We had received several complaints of frozen dessert being sold in the name of ice-cream. We then decided to conduct surprise raids on the manufacturing companies, which were using edible oil and have violated food safety norms. We are also checking if the edible oils are of poor quality, which could risk the lives," said Adhav.

As per the norms of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), ice-cream is prepared by freezing a pasteurised mix prepared from milk or milk products. It must be free of artificial sweeteners. Desserts without milk products, requiring the freezing of a pasteurised mix prepared with milk fat and/or edible vegetable oils and fat; milk or vegetable protein or a combination of both, are frozen desserts.

Dr Sanjay Dabhade, a health activist at Jan Abhiyan said there is a greater probability milk and milk products sold in Mumbai are adulterated or are of poor quality. People should insist FDA officials carry out regular checks and take stringent action.

"If anyone comes across adulteration or a substandard product, they must take a proper bill and report it to the FDA. Only if consumer activism improves will more such cases be detected and reported," he said. Adhav said: "We still need to check many such places. Officials have taken samples to evaluate the quality of food and ingredients used. The reports are awaited. Strict action will be taken against the ice-cream manufacturing units."