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## **No sale of junk food within 50 metres of school campus: FSSAI**

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With the aim to ensure safe and wholesome food for school children, FSSAI, India's top food regulator, has restricted the sale of junk and unhealthy food in canteens of schools and other educational institutions

**NEW DELHI :** With the aim to ensure safe and wholesome food for school children, Arun Singhal, CEO of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the country's top food regulator, has restricted the sale of junk and unhealthy food in canteens of schools and other educational institutions.

Besides this, the food regulator has prohibited the sale and advertisement of unhealthy food within 50 metres of the school premises.

In a first of its kind, the FSSAI is bringing the new principle regulation-- under the Food Safety and Standard Act which aims to provide a safe, nutritious and healthy diet for school children.

"The idea is to provide safe food and balanced diet for children in schools. Foods which are referred to as foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) cannot be sold to schoolchildren in school canteens or mess premises or hostel kitchens or within 50 metres of the school campus," a senior FSSAI official told ANI.

In 2015, the Delhi High Court ordered FSSAI to regulate junk food being sold in school canteens. Thereafter, experts committee at top food regulating agency relooked and framed newer guidelines so that children in school get healthy meals.

"Canteen, mess, kitchen operating in school should have a licence from FSSAI. Also, food business operators contracted by the department of education to function the Mid-Day Meal scheme must obtain a registration or licence from the apex food regulating agency and comply with the requirements of hygienic practices as specified under schedule 4 of the Food Safety and Standards Act."

Regular inspection by municipal authorities and state administration will be done at the school premises to ensure that safe, healthy and hygienic food is served to students, said the official.

Schools administrations have to adopt a comprehensive programme for promoting safe food and healthy diets among school children and to convert school campus into Eat Right School focusing on safe and healthy food, local and seasonal food and no food waste as per the specified guidelines. This has to be monitored by a nodal officer nominated by each school," added the official.

"School authorities have to promote the consumption of a safe and balanced diet in the school as per the guidelines issued by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)," said another senior official adding that schools have to implement these regulations soon after the date of notification.