

FSSAI plans to introduce ‘front of package label’ to regulate junk foods

Front of Package labels seek to provide simple nutrition information in a more accessible location instead on the back or side of packages

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Photo for representation. — iStock

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Expressing concern over increasing consumption of junk food leading to obesity in youth and children in India, FSSAI CEO Arun Singhal on Monday said there is a plan to introduce front-of-package (FoP) labeling on packaged foods to help consumers make healthier food choices.

IIM Ahmedabad has been asked to conduct a survey on the nature of FoP labels in the interest of consumers, he said on the occasion of 15th anniversary of formation of FSSAI here.

Front of Package labels seek to provide simple nutrition information in a more accessible location instead on the back or side of packages.

Asserting that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is capable of introducing this kind of label in India, the CEO said it has become necessary as obesity along with malnutrition is also a big problem in the country especially in youth and children.

“There is a rise in demand for packaged food. There is a need to provide information in a simple way about the impact of packaged food on health so that consumers can make choices,” Singhal said.

He also mentioned that many countries which used FoP labels saw reduction in consumption of junk food.

The CEO said several deliberations have been held with stakeholders. A consensus has been arrived at on most issues after elaborate consultations with the industry and consumers, who had different opinions of this issue initially.

“The technical issues have been settled, but only one issue is left, that is, the nature of the FoP label. For this, IIM Ahmedabad has been asked to conduct a survey,” he said.

The IIM (A) has started the work. After the findings of the survey, the FSSAI will draft the regulations, he added. PTI