

FSSAI issues notice revising standards for synthetic syrup and sharbat

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FSSAI has issued a notice revising the standards for synthetic syrup and sharbat in a bid to improve the additives regulations. The country's apex food regulator has sought views and suggestions from the concern stakeholders in this regard.

As per the revised draft, fruit syrups/fruit sharbats have been removed from the definition under the clause Squashes, Crushes, Fruit Syrups/Fruit Sharbats and Barley Water. However, with regard to the regulations for synthetic syrup or sharbat, they have been separated and given a new definition and parameters under the new regulations.

For sharbat, the regulations stated that it shall contain a minimum 25 per cent of juice or extract of fruit or vegetable or nut or herb or flower or flower, either alone or in combination. Further, it shall also be free from burnt or objectionable taints, flavours, artificial sweetening agents, extraneous matter and crystallisation.

Whereas, for synthetic syrup, they added that it should be obtained by blending syrup made from sugar, dextrose or liquid glucose and be free from burnt or objectionable taints, flavours, artificial sweetening agents, extraneous matter and crystallisation.

"Acidity as critic acid should be between the permissible limits of 0.05 and 0.15 for sharbat and 0.1 to 0.3 for synthetic syrup, respectively, with pH value less than 4.5. The total soluble solids percentage by mass should not be more than 30," stated the regulations.

Manoj Tripathi, principal scientist, Agro Produce Processing Division, ICAR-CIAE, said, "One of the issue that must be addressed in the draft is related to extraneous matter. The extraneous matter wherever prescribed in the definition of synthetic syrup and sharbat shall be classified as follows: organic extraneous matter such as chaff, stems, straw and inorganic extraneous matter such as dust, dirt, stones and lumps of earth differently.

Rachit Kumar, senior consultant with food and beverages expertise explained, "Growing concerns with the use of synthetic ingredients and lobbying by consumers for implementing detailed labelling on food products for better clarity and transparency has resulted in the FSSAI tweaking the existing regulations covering synthetic syrup and sharbat. The use of the term cordial is likely to lead to perplexity in the short term, until beverage processing companies adapt to the updated regulations as defined in the draft notice."