



FSSAI moves to make food packaging safer

Dated: - 29th December 2018 (Saturday)

E-paper

Loose packaging such as coloured and black carry bags, disposable containers with aluminium coating and sweet boxes have emerged as major contaminants of packaged food, prompting the food regulator to come up with new regulation on food packaging. Around 80% of food samples packed in coloured carry bags, 59% in black carry bags and over 24% in aluminium coated disposable containers and 21% in sweet boxes were found chemically contaminated, findings of a national survey of food packaging material conducted by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) shows.



In order to curb the menace, the regulator is set to notify new regulations for food packaging which will prohibit packaging material made of recycled plastics, including carry bags for packaging, storing, carrying or dispensing articles of food. Besides, taking cognisance of the carcinogenic effect of inks and dyes, the new regulations also prohibit the use of newspaper and such other materials for packing or wrapping of food articles and includes respective Indian standards for printing inks for use on food packages, an official said. The

new rules are likely to be notified on Monday, he said. The survey findings shows the packaging material used in organised sector is largely safe, while it highlights major discrepancies in unorganised sector. Over 13% of samples from the unorganised sector failed testing standards showing migration of chemical and heavy metals contamination from packaging materials.

Key provisions under the new Food Packaging Regulation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Prohibits packaging material made of recycled plastics, including carry bags➤ Prohibits use of newspaper and other such materials carrying inks and dyes for use on food packages➤ Regulation to prescribe overall and specific migration limits for contaminants for plastic packaging materials➤ Packaging materials for	 <p>food products shall conform to the Indian Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Food businesses shall have to comply with these regulations by July 1, 2019

“The new packaging regulation would raise the bar of food safety in India to the next level. The implementation of the rules may be a challenge in the unorganised sector and therefore, we have given sufficient lead time before the regulations come into force,” FSSAI chief executive Pawan Agarwal said. He added the primary objective of packaging is to protect the food contents from microbiological, chemical, physical and atmospheric contamination and preserve the food.

Food businesses shall have to comply with the new regulations by July 1, 2019, Agarwal said.