

## FSSAI calls for colour-coded labels on products with high fat, sugar content

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DOE



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Makers of chips, soups, biscuits, juices and other packaged foods will soon have to display red colour coding on the front of packets of products that have high levels of fat, sugar [NSE 0.09 %](#) or salt content as per the regulator's new draft of labelling regulations.



The food industry has expressed its concerns over the draft of the proposed changes in labelling rules drawn up by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

"These regulations are not scientific enough neither practical to be implemented," said Subodh Jindal, president of All India Food Processors' Association (AIFPA). "The salt, sugar and fat content of packaged food depends on the taste requirement of the consumer and is not manufacturers' choice," he said. AIFPA counts Bikanerwala, Tops and Haldiram among its members. Industry insiders claimed that even common food items like milk and fruit juices will fall in the "red category" as the level of fat in milk and sugar in fruit juice is higher than the levels being proposed.


"It is recommended that the authority should instead focus on awareness generation of consumer about balanced diet and suitability of different foods as per one's lifestyle," Jindal said. "Most food companies have also given various alternatives to consumers and it is a decision of the consumer to choose a suitable version."

**Time to Fine-tune**  
**Other key features of new norms**

Mandatory labelling requirements on allergens, veg, non-veg food

 Veg  
 Non-Veg

**X** Food not meant for human consumption shall bear a [X] symbol

An internal mechanism to address the problem arising out of implementation/interpretation of regulations 

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 - Subodh Jindal, President, All India Food Processors' Association

As per FSSAI's draft regulations, packaged food companies will also need to declare nutritional information such as calories, [saturated fat](#), trans-fat, added sugar and sodium per serve on the front of the pack.

The draft regulations will be put in public domain this week to invite comments from stakeholders, officials said. It would be implemented in a phased manner over three years.

"The idea behind the new labelling regulations is to enable citizens to know more about the composition of food products, so that they can make informed choices," said Pawan Kumar Agarwal, chief executive at FSSAI. The regulations are in draft stage and the authority will be open to making changes based on the feedback it receives, he said.

A spokesperson for HUL said that increasingly consumers are interested in knowing the ingredients in their food products and that governments and consumer companies across the globe believe that transparency and fact-based nutrition information enables people to make the right choice.

"At HUL, our aim is to provide clear, simple labelling on our products to help people make choices for a nutritionally balanced diet. We had committed that by 2015, we will include full nutritional information on the pack, i.e. energy per portion on the front of pack plus eight key nutrients and percentage Guideline Daily Amounts (GDA) for five nutrients on the back of the pack. In India, 100% of our portfolio carries the full nutrition labelling, in line with local regulations."

"We are strongly in favour of a FOP labelling scheme where the underlying nutrient profile is based on portions," the spokesperson added.