

FSSAI deliberating on scheme to reduce fat, sugar & salt from namkeens

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Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, the country's apex food regulator, is mulling a scheme for the namkeen and sweets manufacturers, wherein the latter would be urged to reformulate their products in order to reduce the amount of salt, sugar and saturated fats from their products.

The scheme would also have provision of a logo to be used for such snacks or sweets which will have less sugar, salt and saturated fats and use natural ingredients like pure mawa, paneer and milk with no synthetic colouring.

Sources in FSSAI stated that it was long being discussed with the food businesses involved in the manufacturing of traditional snacks, sweets, etc. If the scheme becomes a reality, it would help the regulator to ensure reduction in high fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) from a major portion of the Indian food ecosystem.

"The logo to be given to such products will have a scientific validation based on testing and analysis," stated an official with the FSSAI.

The FSSAI officials were said to have several rounds of meeting with the members of the Federation of Sweets and Namkeen Manufacturers as well.

A spokesperson for the federation stated that there was a proposal for a joint effort of industry to give traditional sweets and namkeen a makeover. Once the threshold limits were set, the industry will work towards reformulating the products, and thereby reducing the saturated fat, salt and sugar. However, there will be a challenge in terms of keeping the taste unchanged.

Meanwhile, FSSAI has been working on the setting up of threshold limits for salt, sugar and

fat in the food products, and has asked the food businesses to voluntarily reduce the amount of fat salt and sugar from their products.

Under the Eat Right Movement, the FSSAI has been able to convince several companies to reduce the amount of fat, sugar and salt from their products. It has added that many companies have even started to reformulate their products.

It is pertinent to mention here that the regulator is also working on labelling of food products, particularly the front of pack labelling. It has added that the work on the threshold limits would complete in couple of months after which it would be out for comments from the stakeholders.