

Report on natural formalin in fish by Aug 2020

December 10, 2019

Panaji: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) stated before the High Court of Bombay at Goa on Monday that research on the naturally occurring formalin in fish is taking time due to the large categories of fish involved.

The FSSAI stated that the research work will be complete by June 2020. The court was also told that report will be prepared by July 2020 and notified in August 2020.

The High Court division bench comprising Justice M S Sonak and Justice C V Bhadang had directed the chief executive officer of FSSAI to remain present during the hearing on Monday. Accordingly, the chief executive officer remained present in the High Court on Monday.

The FSSAI counsel stated before the High Court that the research on the natural formalin in fish has already started. However, due to the many varieties of fish available for consumption which include both freshwater and marine fish, the research work was taking time. The FSSAI pleaded for more time for the completion of the research work on the naturally occurring formalin in fish.

The FSSAI also stated before the High Court that research needs to be carried out separately for each type of fish, hence the process takes time.

The FSSAI filed an affidavit before the High Court and requested for time till June 2020 for completion of the research work. It also requested for time till August 2020 for notifying the report on the natural formalin in fish. The FSSAI said that as research on naturally occurring formalin in fish is being carried out for the first time and that too on large varieties of fish, the report was being delayed.

The chief executive officer of FSSAI remained present in the court with records to indicate the steps taken in the matter and the reasons for non-compliance.

The High Court granted the FSSAI time to complete its research on naturally occurring formalin in fish. However, the court directed FSSAI to file a status report in February 2020 on the progress in the research work.

The court said that there is a batch of public interest litigations (PILs) on the issue and the matter has to be adjourned from time to time only because of the non-submission of the FSSAI report, which is being awaited.

By an order dated October 29, 2018, the High Court had directed the FSSAI to specify the standards in relation to the sale of fish in the state of Goa in the context of the issue of presence of formalin therein.