



FSSAI collects cooking oil samples for quality tests

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Food safety regulator FSSAI on Friday said it has collected 4,500 samples of edible oils from across the country for quality testing, a move aimed at curbing sale of adulterated cooking oils in the market.

The result of this nationwide quality survey is expected within a month, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said in a statement.

The regulator said it has decided to intensify crackdown on the sale of adulterated edible oil with a pan-India surveillance of edible oil, both for the branded and unbranded oil samples.

A quality survey was conducted during August 25-27 across all the states and Union Territories.

"This nationwide survey, (was) carried out for the first time with over 4,500 samples covering a total of 16 varieties of edible oils, including mustard, coconut, palm, olive, and blended oil," the statement said.

Various hilly as well as difficult terrains, including Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & Diu as well as Andaman (UT) have been included as part of this exercise.

The samples have been drawn from hypermarkets/ supermarkets as well as retail and grocery stores. It also includes national and local brands.

"The test results are expected in a month," FSSAI said. The final survey results will help in identification of the key hot spots for adulteration of edible oils in different parts of the country, it said, adding that this exercise would strengthen efforts at the States/ UT-level in devising targeted enforcement drives in the coming months.

"The whole exercise is aimed at ensuring availability of pure and safe mustard and other edible vegetable oils in the country," the statement said.

FSSAI said the survey has been conducted by the State Food Safety department officials.

At least 50 samples were collected from the metro cities -- Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata -- and 6-8 samples each from cities and districts, other than the metros.

FSSAI had shared the detailed guidelines and SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) for conducting the survey as well as procedure of sample collection with the Commissioners of Food Safety in all States/ UTs.

A video conferencing facility was organised to appraise them on the process and safeguards to be followed diligently at the States/ UT-level.

A comprehensive strategy for testing of these samples through the state food testing laboratories or FSSAI-notified food testing labs (including private NABL accredited) to analyse various parameters, including fatty acid composition as well as adulteration of any other oils or harmful or extraneous substance/ chemical has been developed.