

FSSAI prescribes labelling requirements of pre-packaged foods and display

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020, prescribing the labelling requirements of pre-packaged foods and display of essential information on premises where food is manufactured, processed, served and stored.

According to the notification, the Food Business Operator (FBO) shall comply with all the provisions of these regulations after one year from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette except chapter-3 (display of information in food service establishments) of these regulations, to which Food Business Operator shall comply by January 1, 2022.

Under these regulations the FSSAI has defined “Assorted pack”, “Best before date”, “Children or child”, “Date of manufacture”, “Date of packaging”, “e-commerce”, “Foods for catering purposes”, “Front of Pack”, “Infant”, “Lot number” or “code number” or “batch number”, “Multi-unit package”, “Non-retail containers”, “Non-vegetarian food”, “Package/container”, “Recommended dietary allowances (RDA)”, “Pre-packaged food”, “Principal display panel”, “Retail pack”, “Use by” or “expiry”, and “Vegetarian food”.

According to the regulations ‘Principal display panel’, means that part of the container/package which is intended or likely to be displayed or presented or shown or examined by the customer under normal and customary conditions of display, sale or purchase of the food article contained therein while ‘Front of pack’, means part of the package that faces forward (in the principal field of vision) and is typically the first thing a consumer will see when they look at the product.

Under the provisions for labelling requirements of these regulations, every package shall carry the name of the food, list of ingredients, nutritional information, and declaration of vegetarian logo (a green colour filled circle inside a green colour square box) or non-vegetarian logo (a brown colour filled triangle inside a brown colour square box).

Further, the labelling requirement includes declaration regarding food additive, name and complete address of the concerned brand owner, manufacturer, marketer, packer, bottler as the case may be and FSSAI logo with license number.

Besides, net quantity, retail sale prices, consumer care details, lot /code/batch number, date marking should be properly mentioned. The regulations say that “Date of manufacture or packaging” and “Expiry/Use by” shall be declared on the label. However, the expression

“Best before” may also be used as optional or additional information.

It is pertinent to mention that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India had earlier made the Food Safety and Standards (packaging and labelling) Regulations, 2011, but now the Food Authority has decided to divide these regulations into two regulations,- (i) the Food Safety and Standards (packaging) Regulations and (ii) the Food Safety and Standards (labelling and display) Regulations.