

Amid reports of shortage, FSSAI to conduct pan-India milk and milk products surveillance

The food safety body said that the operation would identify hotspots for adulteration in milk and its products and devise corrective actions/ strategies based on the results of the study and suggest a way forward.



The dairy sector continues to grapple with the hit it took during COVID-19 and more recently the Lumpy Skin Disease (which caused the death of 1.9 lakh cattle) and fodder inflation at 30%. File | Photo Credit: The Hindu

Aimed at curbing adulteration of milk and milk products, in both organised and unorganised sectors in all the districts of the States/Union Territories, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) will conduct nationwide surveillance on milk and other products (such as milk khoa, chenna, paneer, ghee, butter, curd, and ice cream).

The announcement on Thursday comes in the backdrop of the country facing an alleged milk shortage with cooperatives reporting an increase in production of only 1-2 % this year and organised and unorganised sector points registering stagnation. The sector also continues to grapple with the hit it took during [Covid-19](#) and more recently [the Lumpy Skin Disease](#) (which caused the death of 1.9 lakh cattle) and fodder inflation at 30%.

Adulteration hotspots

Meanwhile, giving details of the proposed surveillance, the FSSAI said that the operation would identify hotspots for adulteration in milk and its products and devise corrective actions/ strategies based on the results of the study and suggest a way forward.

“The rationale behind choosing milk is due to its indispensable role in our food culture either as a fresh fluid or as a processed dairy product. Milk contains vital micronutrients and macronutrients. People of every age group include milk or milk products in their daily diet. Changing lifestyle patterns and increasing health consciousness are the key growth drivers for milk and high-value milk products in India,” said the FSSAI. Milk or milk products would be tested for compliance of quality and safety.

Previously, the FSSAI conducted several pan-India surveys on milk in 2011, 2016, and 2020 where all samples collected were tested for critical parameters of quality and safety.

“In 2022, the FSSAI conducted a milk survey in selected 12 States (which includes 10 States where the Lumpy Skin Disease was prevalent and two States as under control with no reported outbreak). The administration of antibiotics/veterinary drugs in affected animals & spraying insecticides in the sheds may result in residual contamination in milk. In order to ascertain the safety of milk, the presence of antibiotics, pesticide residues & heavy metals were assessed in the samples collected. The outcome of the survey revealed that the milk sold in the selected 12 States is largely safe for consumption,” noted the FSSAI.