

FSSAI seeks feedback on norms for *mithais*, *namkeens*

CHALLENGE. Implementation will be a difficult task, say industry representatives

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is bringing in standards and labelling norms for traditional sweets (*mithais*) and *namkeens*. Sources said that after several rounds of deliberations with the industry, the authority is seeking stakeholder views on the draft Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Amendment Regulations, 2022.

CATEGORIES

The regulator is proposing standards categorising traditional Indian sweets into milk-based, non milk-based and composite sweets. Milk based-*mithais* include milk-concentration-based, *channa*-based and *khoa*-based sweets. Non-milk based traditional sweets



BIG NUMBERS. As per some estimates, there are over one lakh traditional sweet shops and large number of local and pan-India players in savouries

refer to those that are grain, dry fruits, nuts and seeds-based.

In terms of labelling norms, the draft regulation proposes that *mithai* packages should have the name of the product (such as *Khoa burfi*) along with relevant categories (such as *khoa*-based *mithai*) on the label.

In case of milk-based *mithais*, the Food Business

Operator will need to declare the per cent and type of milk solids under the list of ingredients on the label, the draft regulation stated.

INDUSTRY'S CONCERNS

The draft has also proposed standards for various categories of *namkeens* including fruit and vegetable based, dry fruit and nut-based and composite

products besides labelling norms.

As per some estimates, there are over one lakh traditional Indian sweets shops in the country. In *Namkeens* sector too, there are a large number of regional and local players besides pan-India players.

Firoz Naqvi, Director General, the Federation of Sweets and Namkeen Manufacturers said, "There is a wide diversity in consumption trends and recipes of sweets and namkeens in the country. For instance, we have over 2,000 varieties of Indian sweets. Implementation of the proposed standards will be very difficult in this fragmented industry and could end up adversely impacting innovation in the segments. As an industry association, we are trying to get samples of various *mithais* and *namkeens* tested so we can give as much data as possible to the authority in our comments," he added.