

# Business Standard

## Ingredient-based approval for proprietary foods likely

Arnab Dutta | New Delhi January 25, 2016 Last Updated at 23:33 IST

In a bid to clear the confusion over definition of proprietary food items, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has come up with a new description on Monday. According to it, proprietary food items, prepared using standardised ingredients, are permitted for consumption. The new regulation is a step towards the global practice of ingredient-based product approval, which is in place in countries such as USA, UK and Singapore among others.

"Proprietary food shall contain only those ingredients other than additives which are either standardised in these regulations or permitted for use in the preparation of other standardised food under these regulations," FSSAI said in the notification. It, however, has retained the existing list of food additives to be used in proprietary foods.

According to Ashish Prasad, partner, Economy Law Practice, the definition of non-standardised foods in the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 had much scope for clarification. "The recent definition is a balanced one which got rid of ambiguity. While, it clarifies the ingredients and additives to be used in proprietary foods, it also excludes novel and functional foods, nutraceutical and health supplements from its purview," he said.

Experts say the lack of a list of approved ingredients has led to confusion.

According to Gowree Gokhale, partner, Nishith Desai Associates, the global practice is to have two lists of approved ingredients, indicating permissible limits and labelling guidelines, and banned items. This would help cover all segments of the sector, she says. But in India, the product approval regime till recently pertained to final food products, not food ingredients and additives.

FSSAI is currently preparing a separate guideline for nutraceutical and novel food items which has now been separated from proprietary foods.