

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2947
ANSWERED ON 20TH DECEMBER 2024

FORTIFYING NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF PROCESSED FOOD

2947. SHRI M. MOHAMED ABDULLA:

Will the Minister of *FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES* be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps being taken by Government to improve the nutritional quality of processed foods in the country, particularly in light of rising concerns regarding malnutrition and obesity;
- (b) in what manner Government is supporting social enterprises and entrepreneurs working to incorporate locally-sourced, nutrient-dense foods into processed food products to enhance public health;
- (c) measures being implemented to ensure that food processing units comply with food safety and nutritional standards while promoting sustainable, health-conscious practices;
- (d) whether Government is planning to introduce new regulations or incentives for food companies to fortify processed foods with essential nutrients?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI RAVNEET SINGH)

(a). Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) was established under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as per provisions contained in the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 (i.e. FSS Act 2006) and it has been mandated for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. As per the FSSAI, they have notified the following regulations:

- (i) Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011, wherein quality standards for various food articles have been specified.
- (ii) Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Food) Regulation, 2018 which prescribes voluntary standards for fortification of staple foods such as Salt, Oil, Milk Atta, Maida, Rice and processed foods aimed at maintaining or improving the nutritional quality of foods.
- (iii) Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020, clause 2.5(b), has mandated the Food Business Operators (FBOs) to mention the nutritional information on the labels for consumer to make informed choices while selecting the food articles.

In addition, the FSSAI has also embarked on a large-scale effort to transform the country's food system in order to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable food for all Indians through the 'Eat Right India' movement.

(b). For the purpose of overall development of food processing sector in the country, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) is implementing three major Schemes comprising 2 Central Sector Schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) and Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI) and 1 Centrally Sponsored Scheme viz. Prime Minister Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme. These schemes are primarily aimed at creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet, and to help in providing better returns to farmers, creation of employment opportunities, reducing wastage, increasing the processing level and enhancing the export of the processed foods. Under PMKSY, the Ministry is providing credit linked financial assistance (capital subsidy) to the eligible entrepreneurs for setting up food processing industries and creation of related infrastructure. The total outlay of this Scheme for 15th Finance Commission Cycle is Rs.5520 crore. The PLISFPI is, inter alia, intended to support creation of global food manufacturing champions and support Indian brands of food products in international market. The scheme is implemented over a six-year period from 2021-22 to 2026-27 with an outlay of Rs. 10,900 crores. It has been mandated under this Scheme to use domestically grown agricultural products (excluding additives, flavors, and edible oils) in the manufacturing process of processed foods, which has substantially increased the local raw material procurement. To promote “Vocal to Local”, the Ministry is providing financial, technical and business support under PMFME Scheme to the eligible organizations such as Proprietorship Firms/ Partnership Firms/ Farmer Producer Organizations(FPOs)/ Non-governmental Organization (NGOs)/ Cooperatives/ Self Help Group (SHGs)/ Pvt. Ltd. Companies etc. for setting up/ upgradation of micro food processing enterprises in the country. The scheme is operational for a period from 2020-21 to 2025-26 with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 Crore. All the three schemes implemented across the country are demand driven. These Schemes also intend to support the food processing entrepreneurs including social enterprises to avail financial assistance to create food processing infrastructure for their processing industries to incorporate locally sourced, nutrient dense foods into processed food products for enhancing public health.

(c). As per FSSAI, the implementation and enforcement of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and the Rules and Regulations made thereunder rests with the Centre/State/UT Governments. Regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection, and random sampling of food products are undertaken by the officials of Food Safety Departments of the respective Centre/States/ UTs to check that the food products comply with the laid down standards. In cases where the food samples are found to be non-conforming, recourse is taken to penal provisions under Chapter IX of the FSS Act, 2006.

(d). FSSAI has already notified the Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Food) Regulation, 2018 which prescribes voluntary standards for fortification of processed foods such as cereal products, bakery wares and fruit juices. The Fortified Processed Foods shall provide 15-30% of the Indian adult RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance) of micronutrient based on an average calorie intake of 600 kcal from processed foods (approximately 1/3rd of daily energy requirement for an adult).
