FSSAI issues draft stds for millets & pulses ensuring purity & quality
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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the country’s apex food regulator, has issued draft notifications prescribing revised comprehensive standards intended to address the issues of quality and purity of such products as millets, pulses and honey.

Amending the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Amendment Regulation 2017, FSSAI included revised standards for whole and decorticated pearl millet grains, degermed maize flour and maize grit, couscous, tempe, textured soy protein, sago flour, bee wax and royal jelly.

B Dayakar Rao, principal scientist, Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), and expert, FSSAI, said, “It is a welcome move.”

“There are eight millets popularly grown in India, and each grain is different. Each of them needs its respective standards and grades with respect to procurement and proximate and shelf life,” he added.

“It is difficult to export in the absence of specific standards. The revised standards will provide benefits to both farmers and industry alike and prevent adulteration,” Rao said.

He added that jowar, pearl millet (bajri) and ragi constituted about 90 per cent of the area and production and were now considered as urban healthy foods that may offer solutions to emerging lifestyle diseases. Other small millets contributed the remaining 10 per cent.

Rajasthan is the largest producer of pearl millet and is consumed in the state, while Maharashtra tops in sorghum production.

Karnataka is the largest producer of finger millets, followed by states such as Gujarat, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, in that order.
Meanwhile, as per the draft, the standards for aflatoxin stand omitted under the food category, dealing with groundnut kernel, wheat, maize and rice.

All the standards for pulses given under food grains stand omitted and amended.

They will apply to the whole, shelled or split pulses, which shall be free from toxic or noxious seeds and added colouring matter.

Further the standards for pulses include lentils (masur), black gram (urad), green gram (moong), Bengal gram (chana or chick pea), Kabuli chana (chhole or green chick pea, hara chana, red gram (arhar), horse gram (kulthi), field bean (black, brown or white), sem, peas dry (Matra), soybean, rajma or double beans or broad beans or black beans, lobia or black eyed beans or black-eyed white lobia, moth bean (matki), etc.