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FOOD PRO

Monthly E-Newsletter of All India Food Processors' Association

FOOD SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE 4.0

*Harmonising Global Standards,
Testing Capacity & Trade Facilitation*

The All India Food Processors' Association (AIFPA), in active collaboration with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), organized a comprehensive national conference in Kolkata under the central theme of "Food Safety Infrastructure 4.0- Harmonising Global Standards, Testing Capacity and Trade Facilitation". The high-level convention convened leadership and delegates from Central and State Government bodies, regulatory authorities, scientific institutions, food processing enterprises, accredited testing laboratories, and export houses. Deliberations across the sessions focused on transitioning towards predictive food safety frameworks, modernizing testing infrastructure, addressing Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) bottlenecks, advancing food-grade circular packaging solutions, and unlocking Eastern India's substantial Agri-horticultural processing capacity.



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Report of the “Conference on Food Safety Infrastructure 4.0-Harmonising Global Standards, Testing Capacity & Trade Facilitation” held on 25th September 2026 at Kolkata

The All India Food Processors' Association (AIFPA), in active collaboration with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), organized a Conference on "Food Safety Infrastructure 4.0– Harmonising Global Standards, Testing Capacity and Trade Facilitation" held on 25th September, 2026 at Kolkata.

The high-level convention convened leadership and delegates from Central and State Government bodies, regulatory authorities, scientific institutions, food processing enterprises, accredited testing laboratories, and export houses. Deliberations across the sessions focused on transitioning towards predictive food safety frameworks, modernizing testing infrastructure, addressing Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) bottlenecks, advancing food-grade circular packaging solutions, and unlocking Eastern India's substantial Agri-horticultural processing capacity.

The conference commenced with opening remarks by **Mr. Rajesh Kumar Rustagi, Partner, Natural Condiments & Fruits Co.** who welcomed the gathered dignitaries and emphasized the strategic importance of strengthening regional food safety architecture in Eastern India. Delivering the theme address, **AIFPA President, Dr. Raghav Jadli** outlined the core priorities of the summit, stressing that sustained export readiness requires an agile testing foundation coupled with the proactive harmonization of domestic standards with global markets. In his keynote Address, **AIFPA, Immediate Past President, Dr. Subodh Jindal** reinforced the necessity of establishing robust quality infrastructure to safeguard public health and boost international market access.

In his Address, **Dr. Sanjay Dave, former Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission**, explored the dynamics of global standard-setting, highlighting how divergent MRL thresholds across importing nations elevate laboratory testing costs and compound export rejection risks. In his Address, **Sh. Preet Pal Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries**, affirmed the government's continued commitment toward expanding processing clusters, supply chains, and testing upgrades. In his Inaugural Address, **Sh. Amiya Kisku, Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Horticulture & Department of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal**, detailed the state's agricultural depth and invited larger industry investments in modern technology and quality-driven manufacturing. The inaugural session concluded with a vote of thanks by **Mr. Rajat Budhraj, Chairman, East Zone, AIFPA**.

The technical proceedings examined the operational and systemic dimensions of modern food processing ecosystems. **Mr. Kamalesh Debnath from Envirocare Labs** presented the vision of "Food Safety Infrastructure 4.0," which calls for an industry-wide transition from conventional, reactive, and periodic batch testing (Food Safety 2.0) toward connected, predictive risk governance driven by digitized analytics. He explained that food standards, credible laboratory testing, and international trade operate as a single interdependent chain, where standards are only as reliable as the analytical evidence supporting them.

Regulatory modernization and trade enablement formed the core of the presentation delivered by the Eastern Regional Office of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

Addressing chemical residue management, **Dr. Bappaditya Kanrar, scientist C, Tea Research Association (TRA)** analyzed the structural challenges surrounding MRL non-compliances. He observed that standard discrepancies—such as the European Union's default 0.01 mg/kg limit, US EPA tolerances, and domestic CIB&RC registrations—create acute friction for Indian exporters. Emphasizing that terminal testing at export ports cannot create safety but merely detects past contamination, the address advocated for source-level compliance.

The technical dialogue also focused on sustainable packaging through a presentation by **Mr. Amit Kumar Agarwal, (President – Indian plastics federation)** on recycled plastics in food contact applications. Reviewing the shift from the absolute prohibition in 2018 to the March 2022 Plastic Waste Management amendment and subsequent FSSAI rPET guidelines, he noted that meeting circular economy mandates cannot come at the expense of safety. To fulfill virgin-equivalent migration thresholds under IS 9845, the industry must rely on validated, super-clean mechanical decontamination or advanced chemical pyrolysis rather than informal recycling streams.

Focusing on regional agro-industrial growth **Smt. Kasturi Sengupta, Special Secretary, Food Processing Industries and Horticulture Development Department and Director, Food Processing Industries Government of West Bengal** highlighted the state's agricultural strengths as the leading national producer of vegetables and rice, and the second-largest producer of potatoes. Despite generating over 600 lakh MT of agro-horticultural produce annually, the state currently registers commercial value addition of only around 2.8%, well below the national average of 20%. To close this gap, high-potential sunrise opportunities were highlighted across marine aquaculture (notably Black Tiger and Vannamei shrimp exports from Purba Medinipur).

The conference concluded with consensus that scientific rigor, synchronized laboratory infrastructure, farm-gate capability building, and policy harmonization are critical levers to elevate Indian food manufacturing.

**Glimpses of the Conference on “Food Safety Infrastructure 4.0”
held on 25th September 2026 at Kolkata**



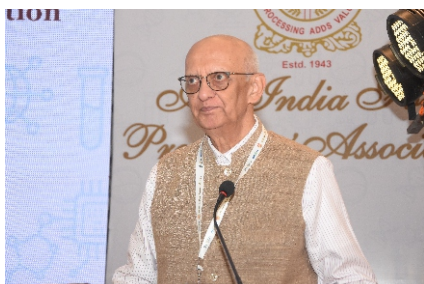
**Welcome Address by Sh. Rajesh Kumar Rustagi,
Partner, Natural Condiments & Fruits Co.**



**Theme Address by Dr. Raghav Jadli, President, AIFPA
& Business Managing Director, Jadli Foods (I) P. Ltd.**



**Keynote Address by Dr. Subodh Jindal, Immed. Past President,
AIFPA & Managing Director, Excelsior Food & Chem. Industries**



**Special Address by Dr. Sanjay Dave,
Former Chairman, Codex Alimentarius Commission**



**Special Address by Sh. Nilamani Biswal,
Joint Director, (East Region), FSSAI**



**Address by Sh. Preet Pal Singh, IFoS, Joint Secretary
Ministry of Food Processing Industries, GOI**



**Inaugural Address by Sh. Amiya Kisku, Minister of State,
Deptt. of FPIs & Horti. & Deptt. of Agri., Govt. of WB**



**Vote of Thanks by Sh. Rajat Budhbraja, Chirman, East Zone,
AIFPA & Chairman, Crushers Fruit Juice Company**



**Dr. Debtorshi De, National Level Resource Person-FoSTaC,
FSSAI, making his presentation**



**Sh. Kajal Debnath, Chief Regulatory Officer,
DFM Foods Ltd., making his presentation**



**Sh. Kamalesh Debnath, Sales Manager, Envirocare Labs,
making his presentation**



**Sh. Neil Ekhe, Technical Officer, FSSAI, Eastern Region
making his presentation**



**Smt. Kasturi Sengupta, Special Secretary, FPI & Horti.
Development Deptt. Govt. of WB making her presentation**



**Dr. Bappaditya Kanrar, Scientist C, Tea Research Association
making his presentation**



**Sh. Amit Kumar Agarwal, President, Indian Plastics
Federation making his presentation**



View of Delegates



View of Delegates



View of Delegates



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Regulatory & Food Safety Updates

Government cuts duty on Crude Edible Oils



The Government of India has reduced the Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on major imported crude edible oils to moderate domestic prices and provide relief to consumers amid rising international edible oil prices.

The BCD on crude sunflower oil has been reduced from 10% to nil, while the duty on crude soybean oil and crude palm oil has been cut from 10% to 5%. The Government has also reduced the applicable BCD on the corresponding refined edible oils, while retaining a 19.25% duty differential between crude and refined edible oils.

The duty rationalisation takes into account the rise in international edible oil prices and its impact on domestic landed costs and retail prices. Since import duties form a component of the landed cost of imported edible oils, changes in duty rates can influence domestic market prices.

The reduction in BCD on crude edible oils is expected to lower landed costs and facilitate the transmission of the benefit across the domestic supply chain. The move is aimed at easing the burden on consumers and containing food-price and broader inflationary pressures.

At the same time, the Government has retained the duty differential between crude and refined edible oils to encourage the utilisation of domestic refining capacity and discourage excessive imports of refined oils. The measure is also expected to support domestic refiners and value addition within the country.

The Government has advised edible oil associations and industry stakeholders to ensure that the benefit of the duty reduction is passed on to consumers. Industry players have been asked to immediately revise their Price to Distributors (PTD) and Maximum Retail Price (MRP) in line with the reduction in landed costs.

Edible oil associations have also been requested to advise their members to implement the corresponding price reductions without delay.

The Government said it will continue to monitor international edible oil markets and domestic prices and take appropriate measures, as required, to safeguard consumer interests while maintaining a balanced policy environment for farmers and the domestic edible oil industry.

Source:- FnB News

FSSAI move to ban Analogue Paneer sale

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has proposed a complete ban on the sale of analogue paneer made from constituents not derived from milk.

The move comes after several Indian states banned the manufacturing, sale, and distribution of analogue paneer, citing adverse health impacts and consumer deception. In this regard, a draft regulation has been issued by the food regulator for public consultation, inviting comments and suggestions from industry stakeholders.



FSSAI proposes to ban the sale of analogue paneer made from constituents not derived from milk. The proposal seeks to safeguard consumer interests and ban the practice of marketing analogue products as paneer, reads an official statement issued by the regulator.

The proposed amendment is titled the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Amendment Regulations, 2026. The regulation seeks to restrict the manufacturing and sale of analogue products under the guise of paneer to prevent misleading consumers regarding the true nature and composition of the product.

Furthermore, products already licensed or registered under the "Analogue in Dairy Context" category will be required to discontinue the use of the term "Paneer" in their nomenclature, labelling, or marketing materials. It is pertinent to mention that various complaints were registered with the FSSAI and the Union Health Ministry demanding a ban on analogue paneer.

In 2025, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi also wrote to the Health Minister seeking a nationwide ban on fake paneer.

Source:- FnB News

FSSAI initiates penal action against E-Com Firms



In a major regulatory enforcement action, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has initiated penal proceedings against Amazon, Swiggy Instamart, BigBasket, Flipkart India, and Zepto, for various regulatory non-compliances, misbranding, misleading health claims, and the unauthorised listing of prohibited items.

As per FSSAI, the regulatory action was taken under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006, along with applicable FSSAI safety regulations.

According to official updates released by the national food regulator, the violations span across several well-known grocery and consumer product categories. Among the key actions taken were penal proceedings against Amazon Seller Services, Flipkart India, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, and BigBasket over non-compliant and misleading product claims associated with Happilo Premium Date Bites - Zesty Orange.

In addition, Swiggy Instamart and BigBasket face action for displaying misleading claims and non-compliant product descriptions across Milky Mist dairy products, including Milky Mist Fresh Low-Fat Cream, Milky Mist Farm Fresh Curd, and Milky Mist Greek Yoghurt.

FSSAI further added that e-commerce platforms including Amazon, Swiggy Instamart, and BigBasket were served notice for displaying and offering Datura (Dhatura) fruits/seeds for sale.

The inclusion of Dhatura on digital marketplaces highlighted severe lapses in vendor monitoring and listing verification procedures on major quick-commerce and e-commerce networks. FSSAI stated that in case of listing Dhatura, non-compliance with applicable provisions of the FSS Act, 2006 relating to sale, display and offer for sale through e-commerce platforms was found.

FSSAI emphasised that online marketplaces are legally obligated to ensure all food items listed, displayed, or delivered through their platforms strictly adhere to statutory labelling guidelines, accurate nutrition information, and food safety standards.

Source:- FnB News

FSSAI Orders Everest to Recall Cumin Powder After Tests Find Excess Pesticide Residues

The action followed testing of a regulatory sample collected from the premises of Riverside Resorts & Holiday Homes Pvt Ltd in Goa. According to FSSAI, the Food Analyst's report detected residues of Azoxystrobin and Thiamethoxam at levels exceeding the permitted limits and classified the sample as “unsafe” under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.



Everest Food Products was allowed to appeal against the initial findings. Following the appeal, the sample was sent to a Referral Food Laboratory for further examination. The referral laboratory also confirmed that the cumin powder was unsafe, with both Azoxystrobin and Thiamethoxam found above the prescribed maximum residue limits.

Based on the confirmation, FSSAI directed the company to recall the entire implicated batch of pre-packed cumin powder from the market with immediate effect.

The regulator has also instructed Everest Food Products to maintain complete records of the recalled product and submit details of the recall process. The company has further been directed to take corrective measures to prevent a recurrence and submit a compliance report after completing the recall. FSSAI suspends bakery licence.

In a separate enforcement action, FSSAI suspended the licence of Creative Bakers and Confectioners Pvt. Ltd. with immediate effect after inspections found severe hygiene deficiencies at the facility. The regulator said the action formed part of its continuing enforcement efforts to ensure compliance with food-safety requirements and protect consumer health.

FSSAI has intensified surveillance and enforcement against food business operators in recent months, including manufacturers, food-service establishments and e-commerce platforms. The regulator has also increasingly used social media to make consumers aware of enforcement actions and food-safety concerns.

The latest action involving Everest highlights the importance of compliance with prescribed pesticide residue limits, particularly for spices and other food products where contamination can directly affect consumer safety.

Source:- Agro & Food Processing

New Launches

Impulse Coffees launches Ube Latte



Impulse Coffees has launched its new Ube Latte for Focus, bringing together the growing popularity of ube with a function-first formulation centred around L-theanine. Made with Real Filipino Ube sourced from the Philippines, the new latte features L-theanine, beetroot extract, saffron and a coconut-based non-dairy creamer. The product is made without artificial colour or artificial flavouring and is low in calories.

L-theanine is the key functional ingredient in the Ube Latte for Focus. It is a naturally occurring amino acid that is associated with focus and attention. With the new launch, Impulse Coffees aims to make it easier to add L-theanine to an everyday beverage routine, while also offering a new way to enjoy ube. Ube, a naturally vibrant purple yam, gives the latte its signature purple colour and also contains naturally occurring antioxidants. Beetroot extract helps bring out the colour, while saffron adds a subtle flavour to the blend. The coconut-based non-dairy creamer gives the drink its smooth and creamy texture.

The product comes as a complete premix, making it simple to prepare at home. One serving uses 5 g of the Ube Latte premix with 100 ml of milk. It can also be frothed using the Impulse Coffees whip frother for a smoother texture.

Mr. Sarah Sarosh, founder, Impulse Coffees, said, with Ube Latte for Focus, we wanted to explore what happens when a flavour people are increasingly curious about is brought together with a functional ingredient in a format that feels familiar. L-theanine was an important part of that thinking, because we wanted the product to have a clear functional purpose while still being something you would genuinely look forward to drinking. Ube gave us the opportunity to approach that idea in a way that felt distinctive to Impulse.

Mother's Recipe launches Bombay Sandwich Chutney

Mother's Recipe has launched its new Bombay Sandwich Chutney, inspired by the city's legendary street-style sandwiches. From bustling street corners and local sandwich stalls to evening chai breaks during the monsoon, the Bombay sandwich has become a beloved part of Mumbai's culinary identity. Crafted to deliver the signature fresh, tangy and vibrant flavour that defines this timeless classic, the new chutney allows consumers to recreate the authentic Mumbai street-food experience at home.



It is being rolled out across many places. The ready-to-use chutney is perfect for sandwiches, wraps, toast, chaats and snacks, offering consumers the authentic taste of Mumbai's favourite street-style sandwich with the convenience and quality assurance of Mother's Recipe. Ms. Sanjana Desai, Executive Director, Mother's Recipe, said, the Bombay sandwich is more than just a snack it's an emotion that generations of Mumbaikars have grown up with. With our Bombay Sandwich Chutney, we wanted to capture the authentic street-side flavour and make it easy for consumers to recreate this iconic Mumbai experience at home, while staying true to the taste they know and love.

Britannia Treat Croissant, Havmor launch new Ice Cream Sandwich



Some indulgences are worth having twice. And when the soft, filled Britannia Treat Croissant meets the rich, chocolatey indulgence of Havmor Blockbuster, there is little reason to choose just one. The two favourites have come together to create the Croissant Blockbuster ice cream sandwich, a deliciously indulgent pairing that brings two distinct treats into one irresistible bite.

The collaboration takes the familiar croissant-and-ice-cream pairing a step further with the Croissant Blockbuster ice cream sandwich, bringing Britannia Treat Croissant and Havmor Blockbuster together in three combinations: Vanilla Croissant & Triple Choco, Mixed Fruit Croissant & Wild Berries, and Cocoa Croissant & Triple Chocolate. The soft, filled croissant meets the rich indulgence of Havmor Blockbuster, bringing contrasting textures and flavours together in one indulgent bite.

Mr. Shekhar Agarwal, GM-Marketing, Cakes, Rusk and Croissant, Britannia, said, consumers are always looking for new ways to enjoy their favourite treats, and this collaboration brings two favourites together and further elevates the experience. Britannia Treat Croissant and Havmor Blockbuster each bring their own distinct taste and appeal to the combination, creating a new way to enjoy them together. We are excited to democratise this experience for our consumers and see the pairing become part of consumers' indulgent moments.

Mr. Rishabh Verma, CM -Vice President Marketing, Havmor Ice Cream, said, food is not just about taste; it is increasingly about discovery, experience and the excitement of trying something new. The viral croissant-ice cream trend is a great example of how consumers are turning simple food combinations into shareable moments. With Havmor Blockbuster and Britannia Treat coming together, we wanted to build on that excitement and create an indulgent experience that feels fresh, playful and distinctly relevant to consumer. This collaboration reflects our continued focus on creating innovative formats that make ice cream more experiential and give consumers new reasons to engage with the brand.

Parag Milk Foods launches Avvatar Popped Protein Chips



Parag Milk Foods is expanding its nutrition portfolio into the fast-growing snacking category with the launch of Avvatar Popped Chips, marking the next phase of the company's journey from dairy to nutrition and now into new-age food categories. The launch strengthens Parag's ambition to make protein more accessible across formats, occasions and consumer needs.

The launch builds on Avvatar's growing portfolio of protein powders, ready-to-drink beverages and bars, with snacking emerging as the latest avenue to expand protein consumption. Together, these formats enable Avvatar to address a wider range of nutrition needs and consumption occasions, making protein a more relevant part of everyday food choices.

Available in Magic Masala and Pudina, Avvatar Popped Chips are non-fried and offer 10gms of protein per 30gms pack, priced at INR 60/-, with no added sugar, no palm oil and no preservatives. The products are available on Avvatar website, Quick Commerce, Vending Machines and General Trade and Modern Trade. The new offering brings Avvatar's protein proposition into a familiar snacking format, extending the brand beyond traditional active nutrition.

Mr. Akshali Shah, Executive Director, Parag Milk Foods Ltd., said this launch marks an important step in Parag Milk Foods' evolution from a dairy-led company to a broader nutrition-led food business. We see a significant opportunity to take our expertise in dairy and protein and build it into categories that are increasingly relevant to the way consumers eat today. With Avvatar, we are extending protein beyond traditional nutrition formats and into everyday consumption occasions, including snacking. Our ambition is to build a holistic protein ecosystem that brings together nutrition, convenience and accessibility across formats and lifestyles. Entering snacking is therefore not simply an extension of our portfolio; it is a strategic step towards creating a larger, more contemporary food and nutrition business with protein at its core.

The launch further strengthens Parag Milk Foods' New Age Business, with Avvatar playing a key role in the company's strategy to build new growth avenues in nutrition and adjacent food categories. By leveraging its expertise in dairy and protein, Parag is expanding its presence into high-growth segments that align with evolving consumer preferences.

With nutrition at the heart of its next phase of growth, Parag Milk Foods is building on its dairy heritage to create a broader portfolio where protein can play a role across the consumer's day from specialised nutrition to convenient, everyday snacking.

Starbucks and Nestlé bring Starbucks Refreshers to consumers' homes

With the launch of Starbucks Refreshers Concentrates, Nestlé and Starbucks are bringing one of Starbucks's fastest-growing beverage platforms from the coffeehouse into consumers' homes. Developed through the Global Coffee Alliance between Nestlé and Starbucks, Starbucks Refreshers Concentrates are mixed with water, milk or lemonade over ice to create fruity, lightly caffeinated beverages made with green coffee extract that provide refreshment or indulgence.



The launch reflects how consumer beverage habits continue to evolve. While coffee remains a daily ritual for millions of consumers, people are increasingly seeking flavorful, refreshing drinks throughout the day, with endless opportunities for customization.

Over the past decade, Starbucks Refreshers have become an important driver of category growth for the brand, growing into an approximately USD two billion beverage platform and becoming the second best-selling beverage platform in Starbucks coffeehouses, behind espresso-based beverages. Their vibrant flavors, colorful appearance and customizable nature have made them especially popular among younger consumers.

Consumers today move between different beverage occasions throughout the day, looking for recharge, refreshment, or enjoyment, depending on their needs," said Ethel Tuitou, Nestlé's Global Category Lead for Starbucks. The success of Starbucks Refreshers showed us a strong opportunity beyond traditional coffee.

What started as a popular summer favorite has become a goto refreshment choice, especially for the midday pick-me-up. With Starbucks Refreshers Concentrates, consumers can now easily enjoy a Starbucks coffeehouse-inspired favorite at home, while we continue to expand the brand into new occasions throughout the year.

Since launching in the United States earlier this year, Starbucks Refreshers Concentrates have exceeded expectations, selling out on Amazon after just one day and in more than 1 000 Target stores within three days. Starbucks Refreshers Concentrates are currently available in three fruit flavors: Strawberry Açai and Mango Dragonfruit, two Starbucks coffeehouse favorites, and Lime Watermelon, a consumer-packaged goods exclusive flavor.

Through the Global Coffee Alliance with Nestlé, we're continuing to bring Starbucks coffeehouse favorites into consumers' homes in innovative new ways," said Nik Dhodi, Vice President Global Coffee Alliance at Starbucks. The strong response to Starbucks Refreshers demonstrates consumers' growing appetite for refreshing, fruit-based beverages that fit a variety of occasions. Starbucks Refreshers Concentrates make it easy to enjoy that experience beyond our coffeehouses and for consumers to customize to their beverage tastes.

The launch builds on a portfolio of Starbucks products that bring Starbucks coffeehouse favorites into consumer-packaged goods formats. Established in 2018, the Global Coffee Alliance combines Nestlé's global reach, expertise and manufacturing capabilities with Starbucks's iconic brand and coffeehouse heritage. Starbucks-branded premium products are now available across CPG and foodservice channels in nearly 80 markets worldwide, demonstrating the continued consumer resonance and growth potential of the Global Coffee Alliance.

Ganesh Consumer Products launches Soya Chunks



Ganesh Consumer Products Ltd. has announced the launch of its Ganesh Soya Chunks and Mini Soya Chunks, expanding its portfolio into the growing plant-based protein category. Available across West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand, the new range is designed to make high-protein, vegetarian nutrition more accessible and easy to incorporate into everyday meals.

Built around the promise of 'Pure Veg, Pure Protein' Ganesh Soya Chunks provide 53.1 g of protein and 15.4 g of dietary fibre per 100 g, making it a simple way to add protein to everyday meals. Versatile and easy to prepare, soya chunks can be incorporated into wide range of Indian cuisines and meal occasions, ranging from curries and pulao to biryani, stir-fries and snacks.

Protein is increasingly becoming part of everyday nutrition, and consumers are looking for options that are nutritious, convenient and accessible. With Ganesh Soya Chunks, our aim is to make plant-based protein easy to include in everyday meals while offering the quality and value consumers associate with the Ganesh brand.

As we build our presence in the category, we will continue to focus on strengthening distribution and awareness while exploring relevant innovations that respond to evolving consumer needs. Our ambition is to establish Ganesh as a trusted name in the soya protein space, while continuing to build a broader, contemporary and relevant food portfolio, said Mr. Devansh Mimani, Director, Ganesh Consumer Products Limited.

The new range has been developed with a focus on quality, convenience and value, offering consumers a choice between Soya Chunk and Mini Soya Chunk variants. Quality and food safety remain central to the product, with Ganesh Soya Chunks backed by FSSAI compliance, ISO-certified systems and regular quality checks across sourcing, production and packaging.

The products will be available through General Trade, Modern Trade, E-commerce and Quick Commerce, leveraging Ganesh's existing distribution network across the region. Following the initial launch in West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand, the company plans to expand availability to Bihar, Assam and other North-Eastern states in the coming months.

The launch marks Ganesh Consumer Products' entry into the soya protein category, building on its presence across everyday food products and expanding its portfolio to meet the evolving nutritional needs of Indian consumers.

India-New Zealand FTA to open zero-duty access for Processed Food Exports



The India-New Zealand free trade agreement (FTA) is expected to provide a major boost to India's agricultural and processed food exports by offering duty-free access to the New Zealand market, according to the Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI).

The agreement will come into force on October 20, with tariffs on a wide range of Indian value-added food products being reduced to zero from the first day of implementation. According to TPCI, processed foods, spices, seasonings, confectionery, bakery products, packaged cereals, sauces, fruit juices and processed vegetables, which currently attract import duties of up to 5%, will receive zero-duty access under the agreement.

The tariff elimination is expected to improve the competitiveness of Indian exporters and open new opportunities for food-processing companies, particularly micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), looking to expand their presence in international markets.

TPCI Chairman, Mr. Mohit Singla said the agreement would provide Indian exporters with immediate zero-duty access across product categories, strengthening their competitive position in the Oceania market. By securing immediate 100 per cent zero-duty access across all product lines, Indian exporters, particularly in food processing, textiles, and light engineering, gain an unparalleled competitive edge in Oceania, Singla said.

For India's food-processing sector, the agreement could encourage a greater shift towards exports of value-added products rather than dependence primarily on agricultural commodities. Categories such as bakery products, confectionery, spices, sauces, fruit-based beverages and processed vegetables could benefit from the improved tariff environment.

The duty concessions are also expected to support Indian companies seeking greater participation in Indo-Pacific supply chains. Lower tariff barriers could make Indian food products more price-competitive in New Zealand while providing exporters with an opportunity to establish longer-term relationships with distributors, retailers and institutional buyers.

TPCI said it plans to assist MSMEs and agri-food businesses in taking advantage of the market access provided by the agreement. Its efforts will focus on helping companies understand technical requirements, meet applicable market standards and build sustainable buyer relationships in New Zealand.

The council also plans to conduct specialised exporter awareness programmes and targeted buyer-seller meetings, particularly for businesses operating in agri-food processing and MSME manufacturing clusters. The focus is expected to go beyond the immediate tariff advantage. Exporters will also need to address areas such as product quality, packaging, compliance, logistics and market preferences to convert zero-duty access into sustained commercial opportunities.

For smaller Indian food businesses, the agreement could be particularly significant by reducing one of the cost disadvantages associated with entering an overseas market. The implementation of the FTA is therefore expected to create a more favourable environment for Indian value-added agricultural and processed food exports. By improving market access and reducing tariff costs, the agreement could help Indian companies broaden their presence in New Zealand while encouraging greater exports of higher-value food products.

India's sunflower oil imports may rise 30% after duty cut

India's sunflower oil imports are expected to rise by around 30% to 3.5 million metric tonnes in the 2026-27 marketing year, supported by lower import duties and improved price competitiveness, according to the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA).

Mr. Angshu Mallick, President of SEA, said higher sunflower oil purchases could lead to a decline in soybean imports during the marketing year beginning November 1. Soybean imports are expected to fall by 10.7% to around 5 million tonnes, he said on the sidelines of the Globoil conference.



The Indian government last week reduced the basic import duty on crude sunflower oil from 10% to zero, making the oil more competitive against other imported edible oils. Because of the duty cut, sunflower oil is now more affordable for consumers. The duty reduction is expected to boost consumption, Mallick said.

The change is expected to alter the composition of India's edible oil import basket rather than significantly increase overall imports. India meets nearly two-thirds of its vegetable oil requirement through imports, with palm oil, soyoil and sunflower oil accounting for the majority of purchases. Major suppliers of edible oils to India include Indonesia, Malaysia, Argentina, Russia and Ukraine.

While sunflower oil imports are projected to rise sharply, palm oil imports are expected to remain broadly stable at around 8 million tonnes in 2026-27. However, palm oil purchases could come under pressure if international prices increase due to tighter supplies.

Eddy Martono, chairman of the Indonesian Palm Oil Association, said palm oil could trade at a premium to soyoil in 2027 as the El Niño weather pattern threatens production and stronger biodiesel demand in Indonesia tightens available supplies. Indonesia is the world's largest palm oil exporter.

Despite the expected shift between different edible oils, India's overall vegetable oil imports are forecast to remain largely unchanged at around 16.5-17 million tonnes in 2026-27.

Mallick said total imports could, however, increase by around 1 million tonnes if below-normal rainfall affects domestic rapeseed production. Rapeseed is India's major winter-sown oilseed crop and contains nearly 40% oil, making it an important contributor to domestic edible oil availability. Any significant decline in production could increase dependence on imports.

Concerns have already emerged over rainfall in Rajasthan, the country's largest rapeseed-producing state. Rajasthan accounts for nearly half of India's rapeseed production and reportedly received around 22% less rainfall than normal during the June-September monsoon season. A weaker rapeseed crop could increase demand for imported edible oils and partly offset the expected reduction in soyoil imports.

The latest projections therefore indicate a significant change in the composition of India's edible oil imports, with sunflower oil likely to gain market share following the duty reduction. At the same time, total import volumes are expected to remain broadly stable unless domestic oilseed production is affected.

The development will be closely watched by oilseed growers, processors, importers and consumers, particularly as global edible oil prices respond to weather conditions, biodiesel demand and changes in international supply.

Centre sanctions over Rs 1,200 cr under PM-RKVY to 10 States



The Centre has sanctioned more than Rs 1,200 crore to 10 states under the Prime Minister Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY), with the funds aimed at supporting agricultural development and strengthening implementation of farm-related programmes.

The sanctions were announced by Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Sh. Shivraj Singh Chouhan. The session was attended by Agriculture Ministers and senior officials from states, along with agricultural scientists and representatives of various institutions.

Under PM-RKVY, West Bengal received the highest allocation of Rs 290 crore, followed by Haryana with Rs 198 crore and Chhattisgarh with Rs 181 crore. Other allocations included Rs 154 crore for Arunachal Pradesh, Rs 114 crore for Bihar, Rs 104 crore for Karnataka, Rs 75 crore for Mizoram, Rs 64 crore for Himachal Pradesh, Rs 58 crore for Jharkhand and Rs 43 crore for Punjab.

Sh. Chouhan called for closer coordination between the Centre and states to strengthen food security and improve farmers' livelihoods. He said the government was focusing not only on policy formulation but also on ensuring timely availability of resources to enable states to implement agricultural schemes without delays.

According to Chouhan, India's agriculture growth rate has increased from 3% in 2015 to 4.5%. Average annual foodgrain production growth has also risen from around 40 lakh tonnes to 84 lakh tonnes. He further said rabi foodgrain production increased by 205 lakh tonnes between 2023-24 and 2025-26.

To strengthen Centre-state coordination, the government will introduce regular monthly virtual reviews with states. State Agriculture Teams will bring together Agriculture Ministers, Agriculture Secretaries, agricultural universities, ICAR institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), ATMA, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), farmers, processors, exporters and government officials. Similar monthly meetings will be conducted at the district level with collectors, agriculture officials, scientists, bankers and farmers.

The minister also announced an annual calendar for agricultural campaign meetings. District-level meetings for the Kharif campaign will be held on May 10 and state-level meetings on May 17, while district and state-level meetings for the Rabi campaign will be held on September 10 and September 17, respectively.

For the rabi season, states were advised to base crop and seed recommendations on soil moisture and water availability, strengthen pest and disease management, ensure eligible farmers are covered under Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs), and conduct transparent Crop Cutting Experiments under crop insurance schemes.

The minister also directed states to take action against fake fertilisers, spurious seeds and sub-standard pesticides and eliminate forced tagging. He advocated natural farming, integrated farming systems and crop diversification to improve agricultural sustainability and farm incomes.

On market access, Sh. Chouhan said the government was pursuing measures covering post-harvest management, scientific warehousing and marketing to improve returns for farmers. He said 100 per cent assured government procurement of tur, urad and masoor at Minimum Support Price (MSP) would be undertaken, with payments to be arranged within 48 hours.

He further highlighted opportunities arising from international Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), stating that Indian agricultural products, fruits, vegetables and foodgrains could gain greater access to global markets, supporting the country's ambition to emerge as a major food supplier.



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