

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3005  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2025**

**USE OF VEGETABLE FATS IN PROCESSED FOODS**

**3005. MS. SWATI MALIWAL:**

Will the **Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has data on the extent, volume and pattern of usage of vegetable fats, including hydrogenated oils and palm oil, in various categories of processed foods, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any scientific studies or consumer impact assessments have been conducted on the impact of these fats on food quality and human health, and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the current regulations of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) regarding the permissible limits, labeling, and safety of vegetable fats in processed foods, and how they compare with international food safety standards; and
- (d) the steps being taken by Government to review and strengthen these regulations?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) & (b): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has no data on the extent, volume and pattern of usage of vegetable fats including hydrogenated oils and palm oil in various categories of processed foods. Ultra processed foods are usually High in Fat, Sugar and Salt (HFSS) and they tend to be high especially in saturated and/or trans fats, salt and added sugars which are detrimental to health. Commonly, palm oil (high in saturated fats) and partially hydrogenated vegetable oil (high in trans fats) are used as the source of fat in processed foods to increase their shelf life. Several observational studies documented that the consumption of diets high in saturated fats increased the risk of mortality from all causes, and Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), and high dietary intakes of trans fats are associated with higher all-cause mortality and CVD. Compared to saturated fats, trans fats increase the CVD risk to a greater extent since trans fats not only increase the LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) but also decrease the HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol).

Observational studies have shown that 2% increase in energy intake from trans-fat is associated with 23% increase in the incidence of CVD. According to WHO, excessive intake of trans fat (> 1% total energy intake) particularly industrially produced trans-fat (Vanaspati) are estimated to cause ~ 500,000 deaths /year.

FSSAI has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020. The sub-regulation 5(3)(b) of the regulation mandates the mention of nutritional information on the label wherein the content of total fat, saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol. FSSAI has also notified draft Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) amendment Regulation, 2020 on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 regarding the display of nutritional information specifically added sugar, salt, and saturated fat in bold letters and a relatively larger font size on packaged food labels. This measure aims to enhance transparency and help consumers make informed dietary choices.

(c) & (d): As per the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulation, 2011, there are no specific permissible limits of vegetable fat prescribed for processed foods. However, in chocolate 5% of vegetable fats is allowed and it is aligned with codex standards.

As per the sub regulation 5(2)(d) of Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020 “A specific name shall be used for ingredients in the list of ingredients” and for ingredients falling in the respective classes. The following class titles may be used, namely:-

| S.No | Name of the classes                  | Class titles  |
|------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1.   | Edible vegetable oil                 | To provide name of the specific edible oil such as mustard oil, groundnut oil, etc.   |
| 2.   | Edible vegetable fat                 | To provide type of vegetable fat (interesterified vegetable fat, fractionated fat, hydrogenated oils, partially hydrogenated oils, margarine and fat spreads, such as mixed fat spreads, vegetable fat spreads) |
| 3.   | Animal fat / oil other than milk fat | To provide name of the source of fat, pork fat, lard and beef fat or extract thereof shall be declared by specific means.   |

As per sub regulation 5(3)(b) of Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020, it is mandatory to mention the Total fat (g), saturated fat (g), trans fat (other than naturally occurring trans fat) (g) and cholesterol (mg) on the label.

Further, the Chapter-2 of the above mentioned regulation prescribes the 'Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods' and all the FBOs shall comply with the specified provisions. The Food Safety and Standards (contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulation, 2011 specifies the safety parameters to be tested for all types of foods.

Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) through its Oils and Oilseeds Sectional Committee, FAD 13 has formulated Indian Standards on edible oils and fats which specify the quality and safety requirements. These include the specifications for the limit of moisture content, colour, refractive index, specific gravity, saponification value, iodine value, acid value, unsaponifiable matter, polenske value, flash point, residual hexane, limits of aflatoxins and heavy metals.

As per BIS Rule 2016, all Indian Standards are subject to periodic review, at least once in five years of its publication or review, to determine the need for revision, amendment, reaffirmation or withdrawal. Accordingly, the above Indian Standards are periodically reviewed by the concerned sectional committees to update them as per latest advancements.

\*\*\*\*\*