

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1994  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2021**

**ADULTERATION IN HONEY**

**1994. SHRI KANAKMAL KATARA:  
SHRIMATI SAJDA AHMED:**

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

- (a) whether the Government/ Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is aware of the recent reports of adulteration of honey produced by the reputed brands across the country, if so, the details thereof and the number of such cases reported, company and location-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has detected the presence of sugar syrup beyond the permissible level in these honey brands, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether cases of foreign honey brands selling adulterated honey have gone undetected by the Government if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether FSSAI has any regulatory framework in place to check the adulteration of honey, if so, the details thereof and the action taken against these brands;
- (e) the other measures taken to curb such practices; and
- (f) whether the Government has introduced online food safety compliance system and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a): Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has informed that Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) had carried out an investigation in which samples of honey were tested for various FSSAI approved parameters and some other tests also. Their report is available in public domain at the url-<https://cdn.cseindia.org/userfiles/cse-investigation-honey.pdf>.

(b) & (c): As per reports received till date from States/UTs and Central Licensing Authorities (CLAs), one sample has been found positive for the presence of Specific Marker for Rice Syrup 2AFGP (2-Acetylfuran-3- Glucopyranoside), which has to be negative as per the clause 2.8.3 (1) of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations 2011 and based on which the product was assessed as unsafe as per section 3(1)(zz) of Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006 by the CLA and notice was served to the concerned Food Business Operator (FBO).

(d) & (e): The standards for honey are prescribed under Regulation 2.8.3 of Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011. These standards have been strengthened and revised and *vide* Advisory dated 01.07.2020

A direction has been issued for operationalising draft Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additive) Amendment Regulations, 2020 w.r.t. revision of standards for honey and, thereby, implementing the revised honey standards for 17 parameters. These standards prescribe the limits for various quality parameters which are characteristics to pure honey. Several additional parameters are considered in the revised standards such as C4 sugar test, 13C/12C isotopic ratio, pollen count/g Min, antibiotic and veterinary drugs residues, Specific marker for Rice Syrup (SMR), subsequently renamed as 2-Acetyl Furan-3-Glucophranoside (AFGP), Foreign Oligosaccharides etc. to detect and prevent adulteration in honey with other sugars.

FSSAI's standards of honey are quite stringent as compared to the standards globally.

The implementation and enforcement of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 primarily lies with the State/ UT Governments. Regular surveillance, monitoring and inspection are undertaken by State/UT Governments under FSS Act, 2006 to check compliance of the related Rules and Regulations. Random Samples of food items are drawn by the State Food Safety Officers and sent to the laboratories recognized by FSSAI for analysis. In cases where samples are found to be not conforming to the provisions of the Act and the Rules and Regulations made there under, recourse is taken to penal provisions under Chapter IX of the FSS Act, 2006.

Commissioner of Food Safety of all States/UTs have been advised vide letter dated 18.12.2020 to immediately carry out the inspection of all the honey manufacturing units under their jurisdiction with a special focus on the presence/evidence of Golden Syrup/Invert Sugar Syrup/Rice Syrup/HFCS or any other sugar syrup in the premise and also enhance the surveillance, sampling and enforcement to check the use of such syrup in honey.

To contain the misuse of imported Golden syrup/invert sugar syrup/rice syrup in production of honey, instructions have been issued to all Authorised Officers on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 that all importers/FBOs importing Golden Syrup/Invert Sugar Syrup/Rice Syrup into India should submit necessary documents at scrutiny stage regarding details of the manufacturer (s) with end use to whom the aforesaid imported food items will be supplied.

(f): To shift the focus from merely issuance of License and Registration through the portal to compliance based system, FSSAI has launched Food Safety Compliance System (FoSCoS) pan-India w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 to replace Food Licensing and Registration System (FLRS). FoSCoS is conceptualized to provide one point stop for all engagement of an FBO with the department for any regulatory compliance transaction. FoSCoS is integrated with digital Inspection System viz. Food Safety Compliance through Regular Inspections and Sampling (FoSCoRIS).