

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 613
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.07.2026

SALE OF EXPIRED FOOD PRODUCTS WITH ALTERED LABELS

613. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B:

DIGITAL CONSUMER JUSTICE AND ENFORCEMENT OF CONSUMER COMMISSION ORDERS

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the recent case in Delhi involving sale of expired food products with altered manufacturing and expiry dates and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether similar cases of relabeling and resale of expired food items have been reported across the country and if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps to identify and dismantle organised networks involved in procurement and resale of expired or near-expired food products nationwide and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has assessed the scale of such illegal practices both in Delhi and other parts of the country and if so, the data thereof;
- (e) whether counterfeit and expired food items are being distributed through retail stores, wholesale markets and e-commerce platforms across the country and if so, the details of the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (f) whether the Government considers existing enforcement by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and State Food Safety Departments sufficient to tackle such rackets operating in multiple States and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI B.L.VERMA)

(a) to (f): Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has informed that Food Safety Department of Delhi and FSSAI has taken cognizance of recent case in Delhi involving sale of expired food products with altered manufacturing and expiry dates. It was reported that four Delhi based firms were involved in deliberate removal and re-printing of expiry dates, batch numbers, and other mandatory label declarations on food products.

A joint team of Food Safety Officer from Food Safety Department of Delhi and Northern Regional Office of FSSAI have conducted immediate inspections in the above mentioned premises under the provisions of the Food Safety & Standards Act 2006. During the inspection, various food and non-food items of different brands were found stored at the premises. Several food products were allegedly found bearing forged manufacturing dates, expiry dates, batch numbers and altered label declarations.

Criminal proceedings have been initiated as per law and Licenses of these 04 firms have been suspended.

Food Safety Department of Delhi has issued an Order dated 09.07.2026 to all Designated Officers and Food Safety Officers in its jurisdiction to conduct regular special enforcement drive in this regard till further order or until specifically reviewed by the Commissioner. This enforcement drive will focus on:

- Fraudulent re-labelling of expired food products;
- Tampering with expiry dates, "Best Before" dates, batch numbers, manufacturing dates, QR codes, or other statutory declarations;
- Counterfeit labels and packaging;
- Storage of expired food products intended for re-entry into the market;
- Unauthorised repacking or relabelling activities;
- and any other practice amounting to food fraud, misbranding, or consumer deception.

Further, FSSAI has also issued directions to all Commissioners of Food Safety of States/UTs to undertake Nationwide surveillance and appropriate action under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 against instances of tampering of expiry dates, fraudulent re-labelling and sale/distribution of expired food products vide Order dated 09.07.2026.

More than 99% of the Food Business Operators (FBOs) fall within the jurisdiction of the State/UT Food Safety Authorities. Accordingly, the enforcement and implementation of the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act, 2006) primarily rests with the State/UT Food Safety Authorities within their respective jurisdictions. To ensure compliance with the standards, limits, and other statutory requirements prescribed under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and the regulations made thereunder, the State Food Safety Authorities undertake regular surveillance, monitoring, targeted enforcement drives, inspections, and sampling activities across the food sector.

Any deviation from the prescribed standards or violation of the provisions of the FSSR, when detected, results in stringent regulatory and punitive action against the non-compliant Food Business Operators (FBOs) in accordance with the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the rules framed thereunder, including suspension & cancellation of licence, prohibition on sale, seizure & destruction of non-compliant food articles and judiciary action through adjudication (civil) and prosecution (criminal) as per the provisions outlined in Chapter IX (Offences and Penalties) of the Act, specifically Sections 48-67.
