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FSSAI Publishes FAQs on Alcoholic Beverages Regulation

Report Categories:

Beverages
Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety
Exporter Guide
FAIRS Subject Report

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Report Highlights:

The Government of India's Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) published a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) with clarifications related to Food Safety and Standards (Alcoholic Beverages) Regulations, 2018 that was implemented April 1, 2019.

General Information:

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On April 9, 2019, a list of FAQs with FSSAI clarifications on the recently implemented [Food Safety and Standards \(Alcoholic Beverages\) Regulations, 2018](#), was published. The FAQs covered the following topics.

1. Geographical Indication
2. Extent of sugar declaration in wines
3. Statutory warning
4. Tolerance limit of ethyl alcohol
5. Vintage label of wines
6. Percentage of alcohol in beer
7. Yeast Parameter
8. Implementation status of alcoholic beverages not covered in the Regulations
9. Existing stocks
10. Levy of fee for registration of new or change in label
11. Usage of grape spirit in Brandy
12. Water as an ingredient in wine

The full text of the FSSAI published [FAQs](#) pasted below is also available on FSSAI's website <http://www.fssai.gov.in>.

FAQs on Gazette notified Alcoholic Beverages Regulations, 2018

The Food Safety and Standards (Alcoholic Beverages) Regulations, 2018 were gazette notified on 19th March, 2018 with an enforcement date of 1st April, 2019. Keeping in view of various representations received seeking clarity on the gazette notification; for the purpose of ease of understanding the said regulation, following are the FAQs:

FAQ 1: How will products with Geographical Indication (GI) be covered under these regulations?

Clarification: GI products shall be registered under Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 the above Act and meet the country specific regulations for such GI products of the country of origin w.r.t. quality parameters.

Further, such products shall conform to all safety requirements such as the limits of heavy metals and microbiological requirements as specified under these regulations and other regulations notified under the Act.

FAQ 2: How to declare amount of sugar in wines?

Clarification: The amount of sugar as specified under clause 5.9.1 may be given in range. The defined sugar content is weight/volume (w/v).

FAQ 3: What will be the font size of Statutory Warning for small size SKUs of 60 ml/90 ml/180 ml?

Clarification: The font size of statutory warning shall be 1.5mm for SKUs upto 200ml pack size and above that, size of 3mm shall be used.

FAQ 4: What is meant by ± 0.3 percent tolerance limit of ethyl alcohol?

Clarification: ± 0.3 percent tolerance limit of ethyl alcohol means the maximum permissible variation which is calculated by adding or subtracting 0.3 in the nominal value (ethyl alcohol) of the declared strength.

FAQ 5: What is meant by date of vintage on the label of Wines?

Clarification: Date of Vintage may be taken as the Year of vintage.

FAQ 6: Is it mandatory to mention the exact percent of alcohol in Beer?

Clarification: The upper limit of alcohol in regular beer i.e, "upto 5%" and strong beer i.e, "above 5 % upto 8%" may be mentioned on the labels instead of exact percent of alcohol.

FAQ 8: Is it mandatory to put the Statutory Warning in a box?

Clarification: Yes putting the Statutory Warning in a box, as indicated in the regulations, is mandatory.

FAQ 9: Applicability of Yeast parameter in Beer.

Clarification: The parameter of yeast in various categories of Beer shall not apply till a final view is taken.

FAQ 10: What is the implementation status of the alcoholic beverages not covered under the regulation?

Clarification: Manufacturing, importing, packing and distribution of 'Craft Beer' and 'Wine Based Beverages' currently traded/ available in the market may be continued. However, for any other new innovative alcoholic beverage not covered under these regulations, FBOs are required to approach Food Authority.

FAQ 11: What will happen to the existing stock from 1st April, 2019?

Clarification: Old unused labels and printed cans are given a time period of 6 months. These as well as alcoholic beverages manufactured prior to 1st April, 2019 can be sold in the market upto 31st March 2020 or till amendments are finalized; whichever is later.

FAQ 12: Will fee be charged for registration of new/change in label ?

Clarification: For registration of new/ change in label as required under the Excise Act, Levy of fee charged may be waived off on one-time basis by the respective State/ UT Government.

FAQ 13: Is it mandatory to use 2% Grape Spirit in Brandy?

Clarification: Yes, it is mandatory to use minimum 2 per cent. of pure grape brandy in case of Blended Brandy. However, one new category 'Indian Brandy' is being introduced which does not require the addition of grape spirit.

FAQ 14: In Wines, can water be added more than 30 ml per kg of grape or fruit?

Clarification: Water added in preparation of wine is in the process of revision from existing limit of not more than 30 ml per kg to 70 ml per kg of grape or fruit and the same will be notified in due process. Meanwhile, FBOs are required to comply with the limit under revision.