

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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India

Post: New Delhi

FSSAI Clarifies Use of Monosodium Glutamate in Noodles and Pasta

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and
Standards - Narrative

Exporter Guide

Food Processing Ingredients

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Report Highlights:

The Government of India's (GOI) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issued an order dated March 31, 2016, to clarify on the use of monosodium glutamate (MSG) as a seasoning in noodles and pasta.

General Information:

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this report was retrieved from the Government of India website <http://www.fssai.gov.in/>. The U.S. Government makes no claim of accuracy or authenticity.

FSSAI issued instructions to its food safety commissioners regarding MSG which notes that the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 allows the use of MSG in specific foods, as per the provisions of Appendix A. MSG use is subject to good manufacturing practices and proper labeling declarations as required under the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labeling) Regulations, 2011. The most recent order clarifies that there are no specific post-production testing methodology to determine whether MSG was added during the production process or if it naturally occurs in the product (barring inspection at the manufacturing site). Hence, the food safety commissioners cannot take action against manufacturers of noodles/pasta based on the presence of MSG/glutamic acid, unless there is confirmation that MSG flavor enhancer (INS E-621) was deliberately added during the manufacturing process and not declared on the label.

The full text of the March 31 FSSAI order is pasted below and is also available on FSSAI website at: www.fssai.gov.in/.

File No: 1 (105) Maggi Noodles/2015/FSSAI (Part-I)
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
(A Statutory Authority established under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006)
(Enforcement Division)
FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, New Delhi - 110002

Dated, the 3rd March, 2016

Order

Subject: Clarification on use of Monosodium Glutamate as flavour enhancer in seasoning for Noodles and Pastas.

Under Regulation 3.1.11 of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives), Regulations, 2011, Monosodium Glutamate (MSG), a flavour enhancer bearing INS number 621, may be added to specified foods as per the provisions of Appendix A, subject to Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) level and under proper declaration as provided in 2.4.5 (18) of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011.

2. It is widely known that Glutamate is naturally found in several common foods such as milk, spices, wheat, vegetables, etc. MSG is the sodium salt of Glutamic acid and one of the many forms of glutamate. Presently, there is no analytical method to determine whether MSG was added to the product during its manufacture or was naturally present in the product. This can however be checked through inspection of the manufacturing premises.

3. To prevent, both, avoidable harassment/ prosecution of Food Business Operators (FBOs) as well as to ensure that consumers are facilitated to exercise informed choices in respect of what they eat, proceedings may be launched against FBOs only when the labels state "No MSG" or "No added MSG" and MSG is actually found in the impugned foodstuff. Commissioners of Food Safety are advised that specific enforcement/ prosecution may not be launched against the manufacturers of Noodles/ Pasta on account of presence of MSG/ Glutamic Acid unless it is ascertained by the department that Monosodium Glutamate flavour enhancer (INS E-621) was deliberately added during the course of manufacture without required declaration on the label as indicated in Para 1 above.

4. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.


(Rakesh Chandra Sharma)
Director (Enforcement)
011-23220994

To,

1. All Commissioner of Food Safety of States/UTs
2. All Central Licensing Authority

Copy to:

1. PPS to Chairperson, FSSAI- For information.
2. PS to CEO, FSSAI- For information.
3. IEC Division- For uploading on FSSAI website.