

**Minutes of the Meeting with Salt Manufacturers on Iodine levels in salt
10th May 2019, FSSAI**

The iodine levels in iodized were specified as follows in the operationalized Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Regulations, 2016:

Manufacture level : Not less than 30 ppm*

Distribution Channel including retail level : Not less than 15 ppm*

*on dry weight basis

Based on the need for an upper limit for iodine in salt recommended by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the concerns of the 'Scientific Panel on Nutrition and Fortification' on limiting micronutrients in fortified foods the standards were revised in the notified gazetted Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Regulations, 2018 as follows:

Manufacture level : 20- 30 ppm*

Distribution Channel including retail level : 15-30 ppm*

*on dry weight basis

However, the salt industry, having adhered to the previous standards without an upper limit for the past several years, expressed concerns about meeting these new standards. They pointed out the difficulty in meeting the narrow range with the current manufacturing set-up and dosers in most salt manufacturing plants. In particular, they expressed concerns about prosecution in the event that a single salt packet sample may have excess iodine by chance as a result of the varying speed of the belt or lumps in the salt, which are quite common.

A meeting of salt manufacturers and representatives of Indian Salt Manufacturers Association (ISMA) with the CEO and CP, FSSAI was convened to discuss this matter. The following key decisions were taken during this meeting.

1. Detailed instructions to Food Safety Commissioners and Food Safety Officers to be provided on sampling procedures/methods to ensure that prosecution is not based on excess iodine levels in a single salt packet sample but on a range of salt packet samples taken from different batches.

RCD Division

2. Salt manufacturers to be provided a time for transition to meet the current standards. Thus enforcement on iodine levels of salt to begin six months after 1st July 2019.

RCD Division

3. A guidance note may be prepared for salt manufacturers to help them interpret the current standards.

Standards Division

4. It was further proposed to have a single range for iodine level in salt to avoid confusion and help salt manufacturers alter the dosage appropriately as follows:

Standards Division

Manufacture level : **not more** than 30 ppm*

Distribution Channel including retail level : **not less** than 15 ppm*

*on dry weight basis

5. Regarding concerns of 'black specs' present in Double Fortified Salt on account of the added iron, an advisory to be issued to Food Safety Officers to not penalize DFS manufacturers for the presence of these specs. Further, the Standards Division may consider adding a disclaimer on the salt packet along the lines of-

"DFS may contain some black/silvery specs on account of iron added to it to prevent anaemia"

Standards Division

List of Participants

Salt Manufacturers:

1. Mr. Bachubhai Ahir, Indian Salt Manufacturers Association (ISMA)
2. Mr Parasmal G. Nahata, Director,Chirai Salt India Pvt. Ltd.,
3. Mr. Venkatesh , Tata Chemicals Ltd.

FSSAI:

1. CP, FSSAI
2. CEO, FSSAI
3. DL, FFRC (RP)