



FSSAI may come out with regulations for analogue dairy products

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PRIYA SHETH

There seems to be renewed interest in India's dairy sector with a host of new players making an entry into this space.

While the retail major Future Group has just announced a joint venture with dairy company Fonterra, ITC has also made an entry into the dairy sector.

The growing competition has also increased the presence of analogous dairy products in the market, according to experts. An analogue dairy product is made up of milk solids and vegetable fat and is not considered a pure play dairy product.

To counter the increasing presence of analogous dairy products, companies such as Amul have appealed to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to take note of this growing market. Analogous dairy products are cheaper than pure dairy products and therefore, consumers are buying these.

The absence of labelling regulations that specifically point out the difference between dairy analogues and pure dairy products are missing at this point. Amul believes that this has had an impact both on the company's income as well as the livelihood of farmers.

Therefore, Amul has sought FSSAI's attention to tackle this issue. Along with bringing about a change in the labelling regulations for such products, the industry is also asking for a new logo to be printed on dairy analogues so that a consumer can distinguish between a dairy and non-dairy product.

Amul has alleged that food items such as cheese, paneer, ghee, butter and other value-added products are being sold under the garb of dairy products, when they are really analogues.

FSSAI has received representations and concerns around the issue of analogues and is examining the matter at present, said people aware of the matter.

Since this is a complex process, the regulator will decide on whether any modifications are required in the labeling regulations of analogous products and this could take a couple of months.

Amul also confirmed that the company has made representations to the FSSAI on the issue of dairy analogues.