

FSSAI - Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

FSSAI full form is the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** which is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

Meaning of FSSAI

FSSAI is an authority to provide a food license to every food business in India. FSSAI makes sure that the food business runs with appropriate license and a quality check. The food businesses are required to follow the FSSAI rules and guidelines. FSSAI is entirely responsible for setting the standard and principles and controls for the welfare of food businesses in India.

WHAT IS FSSAI REGISTRATION (FOOD LICENSE)

FSSAI - Food Safety and Standards Authority of India is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India. The FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India. It is an organization that monitors and governs the food business in India. FSSAI License is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety.

FSSAI License or FSSAI Registration is mandatory before starting any food business. FSSAI Registration is required for all food related businesses such as manufacturers, traders, restaurants, small eateries, grocery shop, importers, exporters, home based food businesses, dairy farms, processors, retailers, e-tailers . who are involved in food business must obtain a 14-digit registration Number or a Food license number which must be printed on food packages or Displayed in Premises. This 14 digit FSSAI license number gives data about the producer's permit or enrollment subtle elements, and the assembling state.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been established under Food Safety and Standards , 2006 which consolidates various acts & orders that have hitherto handled food related issues in various Ministries and Departments. FSSAI has been created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (Act No. 34 of 2006) received the assent of the President of India on 23rd August 2006 and thereafter published in the Gazette of India (Extraordinary) Part I, Section 1 dated 24th August, 2006. Various provisions of the Act came with force on various dates through several notifications in this regard viz. notifications dated 15.10.2007, 28.05.2008, 18.11.2008, 09.03.2009, 31.07.2009, 29.07.2010 and 18.08.2010.

Vide Cabinet Secretariat's notification under Govt. of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 dated 17.09.2007, the subject "Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006" was shifted to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare vide 'The Food Safety and Standards (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2007 dated 15th October, 2007 in Sub-Section(I), in clause (c) of Section 6 of The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 for the word 'Health', the words "Food Processing Industries 'were substituted.

The Act has been amended vide the Food Safety and Standards(Amendment) Ordinance, 2008 dated 7th Feb, 2008, which was replaced by the Food Safety and Standards(Amendment) Act, 2008 dated 28th March, 2008 amending Sections 3, 5 and 6. The Food Safety and Standards Rules, 2011 were notified vide Gazette Notifications Dated 5th May, 2011. Following principal regulations were notified and came into force on 01.08.2011.

Highlights of the Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006

- Various central Acts like Prevention of Food Adulteration Act,1954,Fruit Products Order , 1955, Meat Food Products Order,1973,
- Vegetable Oil Products (Control) Order, 1947,Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation)Order 1988, Solvent Extracted Oil, De- Oiled Meal and Edible Flour (Control) Order, 1967, Milk and Milk Products Order, 1992 etc will be repealed after commencement of FSS Act, 2006.

The Act also aims to establish a single reference point for all matters relating to food safety and standards, by moving from multi- level, multi- departmental control to a single line of command. To this effect, the Act establishes an independent statutory Authority – the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India with head office at Delhi. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the State Food Safety Authorities shall enforce various provisions of the Act.

Establishment of the Authority

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the Administrative Ministry for the implementation of FSSAI. The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) have already been appointed by Government of India. The Chairperson is in the rank of Secretary to Government of India.

FSSAI has been mandated by the FSS Act, 2006 for performing the following functions:

- Framing of Regulations to lay down the Standards and guidelines in relation to articles of food and specifying appropriate system of enforcing various standards thus notified.
- Laying down mechanisms and guidelines for accreditation of certification bodies engaged in certification of food safety management system for food businesses.
- Laying down procedure and guidelines for accreditation of laboratories and notification of the accredited laboratories.
- To provide scientific advice and technical support to Central Government and State Governments in the matters of framing the policy and rules in areas which have a direct or indirect bearing of food safety and nutrition.

- Collect and collate data regarding food consumption, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, contaminants in food, residues of various, contaminants in foods products, identification of emerging risks and introduction of rapid alert system.
- Creating an information network across the country so that the public, consumers, Panchayats etc receive rapid, reliable and objective information about food safety and issues of concern.
- Provide training programmes for persons who are involved or intend to get involved in food businesses.
- Contribute to the development of international technical standards for food, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards.
- Promote general awareness about food safety and food standards.

The importance of FSSAI License can be understood by the statement below:

Any person desirous to commence or carry on any food business shall make an application for grant of a license to the Designated Officer in such manner containing such particulars and fees as may be specified by regulations.

-Food Safety And Standards Act, 2006.

The importance of FSSAI License is that any food business in India works according to The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 has to take the FSSAI License according to its turnover. The smooth working of such business is monitored by FSSAI that is, Food Safety and Standards Authority Of India. In order to incorporate any kind of food business, you need to incorporate it by obtaining food license. Food is a very delicate subject since it directly affects the health of the consumer. Hence, stricter rules and regulations are applied to ensure complete food safety. Before getting into the food business, you need to ensure that your food product is not harmful in any way. Verification is conducted at the time of registration. Food license is obtained hence, making the registration successful. One may ask about the need or importance of a food license. Food license is a must. Yes but why? The same is described below.

Firstly, you need to check whether you are eligible to obtain a food license or not. According to the Act, a food company with an annual turnover below Rupees twelve lakhs only needs an FSSAI registration. However, any company with a turnover of more than Rupees twelve lakhs needs an FSSAI food license. It is a must. The registration can be done online also.

Importance of FSSAI includes:

- The major importance of FSSAI License is that it ensures that your food is verified chemically and hence is safe to consume. 'Health before wealth' is a common quote as well as fact. Therefore, anything related directly to health is a matter of great sensitivity. The Food business is vulnerable to many accusations of food adulteration and use of cheap, unsafe ingredients. Food license protects your food business from

such accusations. Food license is a proof of the fact that your food is safe and is perfectly edible without any health consequences.

- Next, it makes your company reliable. After obtaining a food license, you can make an official announcement of the same. You can also use the fact that you are certified by FSSAI while your marketing. This strategy helps you to gain more customers. They start trusting you. Not only customers, but you will also gain investors and partners. Food license thus, very efficiently increases your reliability.
- Other than reliability and assurance that your food is safe to consume, food license assures the customer that your food is of high standards. At the time of food verification, a quality verification is also conducted. This quality test ensures the high standard of your food product which in turn assures your customers.
- Food license is obtained only after verification. This verification is done at a chemical level and checks each and every ingredient you have used in the making of the food product. This way you are assured of the fact that manufacturing of your food is done in the correct way. The verification may lead to point out any flaw or possible improvements in your food product.

All in all, obtaining a food license is a must because you in no circumstances can take a chance with the health of your consumers. Also, you need to ensure that your customers trust you. You are also protected from many false accusations pertaining to health and food safety issues. Food registration and obtaining the license, therefore, should be taken seriously and should be done as soon as possible. It is beneficial both for you and your customers. Not to mention, the increase in reliability as well as standards.