FSSAI draft rule bans adding sucrose and fructose to products for infants up to 6 months

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News

FSSAI published the draft 'Food Safety and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Amendment Regulations, 2026' in the Gazette of India on 16 Oct 2026. A proviso will be inserted in Regulation 3(6) of the 2020 regulations: 'sucrose and fructose shall not be added in products intended for infants up to the age of 6 months'. At present lactose and glucose polymers are the preferred carbohydrate sources, and sucrose/fructose are allowed within limits when needed. Though the 2020 regulations cover foods from birth to 24 months, the ban applies only to the 0–6 month group. Public comments – 60 days. Aim: complement exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months and reduce childhood-obesity risk. It is a draft, not yet a final rule.

Key facts

Draft	16 Oct 2026 – Gazette of India
Amends	FSS (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020 – Reg. 3(6)
Ban	Adding sucrose, fructose to products for infants up to 6 months
Still preferred	Lactose, glucose polymers
Comments	60 days from public availability of the Gazette

2020 rules cover	Birth to 24 months

Background

- Science: sucrose (cane sugar) is a disaccharide of glucose + fructose. Lactose (milk sugar) = glucose + galactose; the main carbohydrate of breast milk. Fructose (fruit sugar) is the sweetest natural sugar. Maltodextrin is a glucose polymer obtained from starch.
- Breastfeeding: WHO (Geneva) and UNICEF recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, then continued breastfeeding with complementary food up to 2 years or beyond. World Breastfeeding Week – 1–7 Aug. India's 'MAA' (Mothers' Absolute Affection) programme – 2016.
- Law: the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 (IMS Act; amended 2003) bans advertising and promotion of these products to protect breastfeeding. It is based on WHO's 1981 International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.
- Background: in April 2024 the Swiss NGO Public Eye, with IBFAN, reported that Nestle's 'Cerelac' baby cereal sold in India and other developing countries contained added sugar, unlike in European markets such as Switzerland; FSSAI then began an examination.

Tamil Nadu link: marking World Breastfeeding Week, CM J. Jayalalithaa on 3 Aug 2015 opened, via video-conference, 352 breastfeeding rooms at bus stands across the State and 7 human milk banks in government hospitals at Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Coimbatore, Theni, Salem, Thanjavur and Egmore.

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