



Edible oils oversight: Govt to issue new vegetable oil regulation order next week, aims to enhance transparency and tracking

India's vegetable oil sector is set for enhanced oversight with the upcoming VOPPA Regulation Order 2025, mandating digital reporting of key data. This initiative aims to improve market monitoring and compliance, addressing concerns about pricing and availability. While imports fluctuate, the government focuses on boosting domestic oilseed production through strategic schemes and technology

The Centre will issue a new regulation next week to improve oversight and transparency in India's vegetable oil sector, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said on Thursday. The new framework, titled the 2025 Vegetable Oil Products, Production and Availability (VOPPA) Regulation Order, will replace the existing 2011 order, PTI reported. It introduces mandatory digital reporting of edible oil production, sales, pricing and stock data, enabling real-time market monitoring and improved regulatory compliance. "The associations have been consulted. It's in the final stages now, probably by next week it will be notified," Chopra told reporters on the sidelines of the IVPA Global Roundtable, organised by the Indian Vegetable Oil Producers' Association.

Chopra said the order will allow the ministry to better track production and pricing. "Right now we are groping in the dark because we are dependent on the association for the data," he said. He added that the VOPPA framework will help "track production, pricing and availability in real-time, providing critical data to industry stakeholders while improving compliance, market monitoring, and product integrity".

Duty cuts and pricing pressure

On questions about customs duty cuts, the secretary said the government had taken calibrated steps to reduce import duties on crude edible oils, aimed at easing consumer prices and absorbing global shocks. The Centre is conducting inspections and working with industry associations to ensure that duty cuts are passed on to consumers. "We are monitoring market dynamics... to ensure affordability," he said. Despite a broader easing in food inflation, edible oils remain an outlier. "Edible oil has seen 20-30 per cent annual inflation except groundnut oil, which remains a concern for the government," Chopra noted. He said mustard oil prices remain firm but the government has buffer stocks of 7 lakh tonnes of mustard seed, held by Nafed, which could be released to manage prices.

Domestic production challenges

On India's self-sufficiency goals in oilseeds, Chopra admitted that raising domestic output remains a major challenge. He said the average yield of soybean, sunflower and mustard crops in India remains significantly below global averages, and achieving better output would require "substantial investment in research and development, infrastructure development and adoption of modern agricultural practices." However, he added that India's newly developed oilseed varieties have global genetic potential and the focus now must be on scaling production through seed replacement and wider access.

The government is pushing this agenda through schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana and the National Mission on Edible Oils- Oilseeds.

Industry view

Speaking at the event, US Soybean Export Council Regional Director Kevin Roepke said no country can be self-sufficient in every commodity. He suggested that the US could increase soybean oil exports to India, given the opportunity. IVPA President Sudhakar Desai said that India's edible oil imports have dropped 8% over the last six months, but are now rebounding due to softer global prices.

He noted that mustard markets remain firm amid lower crop speculation. "There may be a need for a calibrated release of government stocks to moderate this trend," he added. Desai said that "the global vegetable oil sector continues to be shaped by evolving supply-demand dynamics, price volatility, and shifting geopolitical tensions," making data-driven dialogue critical. The roundtable was also attended by Godrej Industries Chairman and MD Nadir B Godrej and ITC AgriBusiness Head S Sivakumar.

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