

SEMINAR ON DAIRY PRODUCTS OR IMITATIONS: CONSUMER DILEMMA



19th October 2019



**INDIAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION
(GUJARAT STATE CHAPTER)
SMC COLLEGE OF DAIRY SCIENCE, AAU, ANAND.**

Venue: Bhaikaka Hall, Law Garden, Ahmedabad.

Indian Dairy Association (Gujarat State Chapter) in association with SMC College of Dairy Science, Anand Agriculture University, Anand organized a seminar on “Dairy Products or Imitations: Consumer Dilemma” on 19th October 2019 at Bhaikaka Hall, Law Garden, Ahmedabad.



This seminar was organized to bring together the key stakeholders of the dairy industry viz., dairy professionals, academia, policy makers and consumers to discuss with them the impact of analogue/imitation products in dairy industry as well as in the society and consumers mind. Shri H.G. Koshia, Commissioner, FDCA, Gujarat remained present as the Chief Guest of the function. The program was attended by about 300 persons from dairy and non-dairy professionals, industry leaders, government officials, students, consumer organizations, nutritionists as well as press and media.

Analogue/imitation products are products which are similar both physically as well as functionally to the original product. Imitations or analogue products are designed and manufactured using cheap ingredients which substitute partially or wholly the original ingredient of the product these imitate. For example, milk fat, which is costly, is often substituted with cheap vegetable fats/oils to manufacture products like margarine/vegetable fat spreads (imitating butter), frozen desserts (imitating ice-cream), filled cheese (imitating natural cheese), filled cream (imitating dairy cream), burfi (imitating sweetened khoa), etc. Additionally vegetable proteins are also used to substitute milk protein in some of the above-mentioned products. Analogue/imitation products remains a big challenge to the dairy industry of India and if the proliferation of such look-alike dairy products, made out of using cheaper ingredients is not stopped, the dairy farming in India shall be hurt to a point of no return.



To safeguard the interest of dairy farmers on one hand and the guide the consumers on the other hand, the entire dairy fraternity along with Government of India is working hand-in-hand by creating awareness among consumers through advertisements, seminars, etc. as well as framing appropriate regulations to differentiate between dairy products and their analogue/imitations.

Various regulations have been drafted and enforced by regulators both nationally as well as internationally to safeguard interest of dairy farmers as well as consumers as a whole. Various states of USA had implemented ban on yellow coloured margarine to ensure that the product is not masqueraded as butter. Implementation of colouring margarine pink, popularly known as the “pink law” was also an effort taken up to easily differentiate it from butter. This helped in creating awareness among consumers and helping them to make a judicious choice.



USA has also proposed The Dairy Pride Act which specifically deals with analogue/imitation products which would protect the integrity of dairy products by enforcing existing labelling requirements. Indian apex food regulator FSSAI has also operationalized the standards of milk and milk products with-effect-from 1st of July, 2018 which redefines milk and milk products in a more comprehensive manner especially taking into consideration the applicability of “dairy terms” under section 3 of the regulation. Still, the business of analogue/imitation dairy products is proliferating unabated and profusely in India. Strict enforcement of the revised regulation is the need of the hour as is efficient consumer awareness campaigns by the dairy fraternity.



Dr. J. B. Prajapati, Vice President, IDA, Gujarat Chapter and Principal & Dean, SMC College of Dairy Science, AAU, Anand in his welcome address, highlighted the importance of creating awareness among consumers about dairy products and their analogues. He narrated the peculiarities of Indian Dairy industry and stressed that Dairying in India is not simply a business, but is a model for socio-economic development, as it is a livelihood for millions of farmers. The cooperative model of dairying in India ensures about 70-75% of returns back to milk producers.

Hence, anything which can damage dairy industry in India, will also affect socioeconomic development. The analogues have become threat to dairy industry and has also become tool which misleads consumers in the name of dairy products.

Shri Amit Vyas, Managing Director, Amul Dairy, Anand appraised about the consequences of imitation dairy product sin in Indian market. He endorsed the need of various awareness measures to educate the consumers about dairy and dairy analogues. Shri Meenesh Shah, Executive Director, NDDB, Anand highlighted the importance of value added dairy products to increase farmers income. He also added that in context to value addition, the problem of imitation products comes in large. He also stressed on the need



for mechanization of process for traditional dairy products like *Rasagolla*, *Sandesh*, etc., as there is huge untapped market for these indigenous products. He said that there is more prevalence of imitation products in HORECA segments. He raised the need that more stringent standards for products and labelling rules need to be implemented to help the consumer to distinguish between pure dairy products and their analogues. He also suggested on introduction of special colour coding to distinguish dairy and non-dairy products.

Shri C S Gohil, Designated Officer, FDCA, Gujarat highlighted the role of government in monitoring the spurious dairy products and tackling heavily on the culprit of adulteration. He indicated that the team of officers in Gujarat has now become double and hence it will help in proper monitoring of the quality. Shri K. M. Jhala, Chief Operating Officer of GCMF Ltd., Anand viewed analogue market as unethical and unfair. He also stressed on the need for proper labelling of ingredients so that the consumers are not cheated. Shri H. G. Koshia, Commissioner, FDCA, Gujarat,



graced the inaugural function and endorsed the views expressed by all the experts and measures being taken to safeguard consumers against imitation products. Address the press, he gave examples of measures taken by Government to curb the menace of adulteration and sub-standard quality dairy products.

The technical session had four lead speakers from dairy, nutrition, legal and market experts namely Shri Kuldeep Sharma, Suruchi Consultant, Noida., Shri Saad Khan, National Planning Director FCB, Ulka, Dr. Nihar Shah, Nutritionist, Ahmedabad., Shri Sameer Saxena, Senior Manger., GCMMF Ltd., Anand and Shri Aditya Jain, Senor Manager, NDDDB, Anand.



During the panel discussion Dr. J. B. Prajapati, Principal & Dean, SMC College of Dairy Science, Anand, Shri Niles Mathur, Havmor Ice cream, Ahmedabad, Dr. Anindita Mehta, Scientist, Consumer Education and Research Centre, Shri Jayen Mehta, Senior General Manger, GCMMF Ltd., Anand and Shri Saad Khan, National Planning Director FCB, Ulka shared their views on Dairy imitation products and answered the queries of audience.