

Agriculture ministry launches first-ever national edible oil consumption survey



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The Union agriculture ministry has launched its first-ever survey to assess edible oil consumption patterns in India, aiming to effectively implement the new Mission on Edible Oils-Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds), a senior government official said. The 45-day questionnaire-based survey, which began on January 9, will continue until

February 23. The initiative comes as India - the world's largest consumer and importer of edible oils - lacks recent data on consumption patterns.

"The survey aims to capture the consumption pattern and choice of edible oils, which will help in policy decisions," the official told PTI.

Industry reports indicate that per capita annual consumption of edible oil has risen to over 20 kg in India, significantly exceeding the recommended limits of 12 kg by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and 13 kg by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

This marks a substantial increase from 2.9 kg in 1950-60, driven by factors such as rising incomes, urbanisation,

and changing dietary habits.

The comprehensive survey focuses on household cooking oil preferences and includes questions about demographic details, domicile, and residence type.

It explores specific aspects such as types of oils used, deep-frying frequency, seasonal usage patterns, and factors influencing oil selection, including health benefits and price considerations.

The questionnaire also assesses public awareness about health risks like trans fats, attitudes toward oil reuse, and concerns about oils in packaged foods.

Additionally, it examines consumer behaviour related to advertisements, label-reading practices, and

willingness to pay premium prices for healthier oil options. Survey results will help determine priority oilseeds under the NMEO-Oilseeds programme, scheduled to launch in the upcoming kharif (summer) season starting July. The mission, with a financial outlay of Rs 10,103 crore over seven years, aims to increase domestic oilseed production from 39 million tonnes in 2022-23 to 69.7 million tonnes by 2030-31.

Currently, India imports 55-60 per cent of its edible oil requirements from countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Argentina, Brazil, Russia, and Ukraine. In the 2023-24 oil marketing year, India's edible oil imports reached approximately 15.96 million tonnes.