

PHDCCI calls for early adoption of pet food standards, lowering GST

Says measures will help the ₹2,700-cr pet food industry

OUR BUREAU

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PHDCCI, on Friday, called for an early adoption of standards for pet foods and lowering of GST to 5 per cent to help pet owners and the ₹2,700-crore pet food industry in the country.

PHDCCC president Sanjay Aggarwal, in a letter written to Atul Chaturvedi, Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, said the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has already drafted the draft "Pet Food for Dogs and Cats - Specification" that was finalised by the Animal Husbandry, Feeds and Equipment Sectional Committee and approved by the Food and Agriculture Division Council.

He called for an early adoption of such standards, after due deliberations, as the pet-food industry in the country is currently very fragmented and lacks uniformity in manufacturing practices, ingredi-



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ents, labelling and packaging. Moreover, pet owners are not even aware whether the dog/cat food available in the market will meet the minimum nutritional requirements. There is also no cap on the levels of contaminants.

Consumption of such pet-food may actually be harmful to the health of cat/dog. This leads to a lot of confusion in the minds of pet owners, who then resort to home-cooked food for their pets, greatly hampering the growth of pets and the pet-food industry, he said.

Issue of high GST

He also flagged the issue of high 18 per cent GST on cat and dog foods and stressed the need for clubbing pet

foods along with other animal feed and thus bring down the GST to 5 per cent.

Stating that pet food gained significance over the years because their owners have started paying more attention to their nutrition, Aggarwal said India, where there are 25 million pet dogs and 4.5 million cats, is emerging as a potential market for pet food.

At present, there is not enough capacity of the Indian industry to manufacture and cater to the growing demand — growing at a rate of 20 per cent — of pet food, and there is huge dependency on imported food and ingredients.

The pre-packaged pet food market is estimated at ₹2,500-2,700 crore, but less than 15-18 per cent of this market is catered to domestically, according to industry experts. This indicates the huge potential for investment and employment creation as also by-product utilisation, which will save food loss and prevent pollution from the meat and poultry industry, Aggarwal said.