August 19, 2026

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

15-day sugar stock limit for bulk consumers until November 30

S.O. 4587(E) bars bulk consumers using over ten metric tons of sugar a month from keeping stock beyond fifteen days of use, September 1 to November 30, 2026.

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, issued Order S.O. 4587(E), dated August 19, 2026, the Sugar (Stockholding Limit of Bulk Consumers) Order, 2026. It was published the same day in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), No. 4407. The Central Government made it under sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. It comes into force on September 1, 2026 and remains in force up to November 30, 2026. It is signed by Ashwini Srivastava, Jt. Secy., under F. No. 1(2)/2026-SP-I.

KEY FACTS

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Under the order, no bulk consumer "using or consuming more than ten metric tons of sugar per month as raw material for production, consumption or use, in any manner" shall keep sugar in stock "for any period exceeding fifteen days for such consumption or use". The order does not apply to any institutions belonging to the Central Government, the State Government, the Union Territory Administration or a local body.

An Explanation defines a bulk consumer as a "confectioner, soft drink manufacturer, food processing industry, sweetmeat seller or any other institutional buyer consuming not less than ten metric tons of sugar as average monthly consumption during last one year excluding the current month". The two thresholds are worded differently. The stock limit names consumers using "more than ten metric tons" a month, while the definition takes in average monthly consumption of "not less than ten metric tons" over the last year.

The monthly quantity of sugar each sugar mill sells to a bulk consumer, directly or through dealers, is to be verified with reference to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) returns filed by the sellers and/or buyers using the relevant "Harmonised System of Nomenclature (HSN) Code applicable to sugar". Consumption of sugar is to be determined with reference to the same returns. The order does not give the HSN code. It has no penalty clause of its own and does not require bulk consumers to file a return or declare their stock. It does not say how stock held above the limit on September 1, 2026 is to be dealt with, and does not define "institutional buyer".

Issued by	Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Document	Order S.O. 4587(E), the Sugar (Stockholding Limit of Bulk Consumers) Order, 2026
Dated	August 19, 2026
Published	Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), No. 4407, August 19, 2026

Legal basis	Sub-section (1) of section 3, Essential Commodities Act, 1955
Applies to	Bulk consumers using or consuming more than ten metric tons of sugar per month as raw material
Takes effect	September 1, 2026; in force up to November 30, 2026
Stock limit	No stock for any period exceeding fifteen days for such consumption or use
Bulk consumer	Confectioner, soft drink manufacturer, food processing industry, sweetmeat seller or any other institutional buyer consuming not less than ten metric tons of sugar as average monthly consumption during last one year, excluding the current month
Exempt	Institutions belonging to the Central Government, the State Government, the Union Territory Administration or a local body
Verification	Monthly sugar sold by each sugar mill to a bulk consumer, directly or through dealers, verified, and consumption determined, from GST returns filed by sellers and/or buyers using the HSN code applicable to sugar
Penalty	No penalty clause in the order itself
Related	The separate order on sugar dealers, S.O. 4165(E) of July 28, 2026, in force from August 1 up to November 30, 2026, as amended by S.O. 4907(E) of September 3, 2026 and S.O. 5461(E) of October 6, 2026: from October 15, 2026, no dealer may hold stock for more than fifteen days from receipt or keep more than 1000 quintals (2000 quintals in Kolkata and its extended metropolitan areas and the State of Assam)
File number	F. No. 1(2)/2026-SP-I
Signed by	Ashwini Srivastava, Jt. Secy.

The order (PDF, 751 KB)

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Checked against the official copy on October 28, 2026.

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