FSSAI

Food importers may pay FSSAI fees after visual inspection

FSSAI's public notice of April 10, 2026 lets importers and customs brokers pay fees in FICS after visual inspection, before the P-NOC, NOC or NCR is generated.

THE FOOD SAFETY AND Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Trade and International Cooperation Division, under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, issued a public notice under F. No. TIC/3/2023-IMPORTS-FSSAI, dated April 10, 2026. Its subject is "System improvement in payment workflow for visual inspection and laboratory testing charges in FICS/ SWIFT to enhance ease of doing business". It is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority and signed by Manvesh Kumar, IRS, Director (Trade and International Cooperation).

KEY FACTS

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FSSAI · April 10, 2026

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The notice recalls that, under regulation 5(2)(b) of the Food Safety and Standards (Import) Regulations, 2017, an applicant pays the fees the Food Authority specifies for scrutiny of documents, visual inspection and drawing of samples once the application passes scrutiny. FSSAI Order No. 12014/01/2020-QA of January 19, 2023 prescribes the testing fees for import samples. In the Food Import Clearance System (FICS), food consignments referred by ICEGATE to FSSAI go through document scrutiny, visual inspection and laboratory analysis in turn. Until this notice, a payment link was generated after the Authorized Officer scrutinized the documents, and visual inspection and sampling started only after payment, so any delay in paying delayed clearance.

FSSAI has introduced flexibility in when the fee is paid. Importers and customs brokers (CBs) may now pay the requisite fee after visual inspection but before the Provisional No Objection Certificate (P-NOC), No Objection Certificate (NOC) or Non-Conformance Report (NCR) is generated, as the case may be. They no longer have to pay before visual inspection. Payment of all applicable fees remains mandatory before the final clearance decision, which the notice lists as "PNOC/ NOC/ NCC", and FSSAI issues that final certificate only after payment. FSSAI expects inspection, sampling and fee payment to run side by side and the dwell time of imported food consignments to fall.

The notice informs importers, customs brokers, laboratories and other agencies that FSSAI "has initiated the system improvements" in FICS, which is integrated with SWIFT/ICEGATE. It was sent to food importers and their associations, customs brokers, CBIC officers including DG Systems, FSSAI's Regional Directors, its Authorized Officers at ports of entry and its notified laboratories. It gives no date from which the new order of payment applies, and it does not set or change any fee. FSSAI's list of advisories, read on October 28, 2026, shows no later notice on fee payment in FICS.

Issued by	Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Trade and International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Document	Public Notice, F. No. TIC/3/2023-IMPORTS-FSSAI

Dated	April 10, 2026
Applies to	Food consignments referred by ICEGATE to FSSAI in the Food Import Clearance System (FICS); importers and customs brokers paying the fees
Takes effect	No date stated; FSSAI says it "has initiated the system improvements"
Fees may now be paid	After visual inspection, before the P-NOC, NOC or NCR is generated
Fees were paid	After document scrutiny, before visual inspection and sampling
Still required	All applicable fees before the final clearance decision ("PNOC/ NOC/ NCC")
Fees concerned	Scrutiny of documents, visual inspection and drawing of samples (regulation 5(2)(b), FSS (Import) Regulations, 2017); testing fees under FSSAI Order No. 12014/01/2020-QA, January 19, 2023
Signed by	Manvesh Kumar, IRS, Director (Trade and International Cooperation)
Related	Food Safety and Standards (Laboratory and Sample Analysis) Amendment Regulations, 2026, notified September 14, 2026: from April 1, 2027, laboratories must report on import samples within five days of receipt

The public notice (PDF, 744 KB)

Source: FSSAI's own copy.

Checked against the official copy on October 28, 2026.

IndusDesk

hello@indusdesk.com · +91 11 4141 3939

9th Floor, Hemkunt House, Rajendra Place, New Delhi, Delhi 110008, India

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