RoohAfza all set to splash the UAE

RoohAfza, Hamdard’s concentrated syrup drink, was officially showcased at the Gulfood 2018 exhibition. The drink has been growing 20 per cent year on year and controls nearly half of India’s concentrated syrup market. Executives said they plan to introduce the drink to the UAE market, in addition to a few other products.

Mansoor Ali, chief sales and marketing officer at Hamdard India, said the company was working on making the product available at major retailers across the UAE. “Right now, it’s all about making consumers aware about the product and how it can be used. One thing we want to focus on is changing the idea that it is just a summer drink. While a lot of people have fond memories of drinking a cool glass of RoohAfza on a hot day, the truth is there are many other ways of using the syrup. Parents can mix the syrup in milk for their children, you can use it in desserts, you can even use it as a sweetener to compliment other drinks.”

Hamdard also plans to launch other products in the region, including its Roghan Badam Shirin, Joshua, Sualin, Cinkara tonic, as well as its range of Unani products.

FSSAI signed an MOU with AOAC

AOAC to support FSSAI in its capacity building programmes

FSSAI signed an MOU with AOAC on the inaugural day of 5th annual conference of AOAC International at New Delhi recently. As per the MoU, the AOAC International – a globally recognised standards developing organisation – will offer free access to the official method of analysis to the FSSAI. It will also support FSSAI in its capacity building programmes.

After exchanging the memorandum of agreement (MoU) Food safety regulator FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal said food testing labs at state level are not up to the mark and serious efforts are being made to strengthen them by providing financial help and capacity building training. “Of course, we continue to face problems with the poor quality of state labs for good reasons perhaps. We are trying to improve these labs,” Agarwal said. However, the regulator is closely working with state governments to ensure the labs are strengthened and they come up to the standards that the country deserves, he added.

Since some of the states do not have private lab capacity, the FSSAI CEO said, “The lab capacity even in the private sector in most of North east, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttarakhand is very poor. That’s why we are pursuing state governments to upgrade their labs.”

At present, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has total 62 labs spread across the country. Out of which, only 10 are accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Testing & Calibration Laboratories (NABL). The private sector has 150 labs which are all NABL accredited, explained N. Bhaskar, FSSAI, Advisor (QA) in his presentation.

The FSSAI has decided to strengthen 45 state government labs with financial and capacity building training. “A significant headway has been made in that, though more rapid progress is required. We have already supported 22 labs and getting more states and more labs on board is now a challenge,” he noted.

The FSSAI is also encouraging mobile testing labs. Already 30 such labs are in the field. They do rapid testing and are creating awareness about food safety, he added. Agarwal said that a reasonable amount of work has been done in the area of food testing and analytics in the last one year despite limited human resources.

(L-R) Dr. Kaushik Banerjee, Ms. DeAnn L. Benesh, Dr. S. K. Saxena, Mr. Pawan Kumar Agarwal, Dr. Erik Konings