

Firms to stop supply of plastic films to make milk pouches from Dec 15

Mum Dairies Say Yet To Get Any Notice

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Plastic manufacturers in Maharashtra and Daman have decided to suspend supply of plastic films, used to make milk pouches, to the state's dairies from December 15. This is likely to affect milk supply as dairies usually have plastic film stocks to last them 10-12 days.

The Maharashtra Plastic Manufacturers' Association took the decision in view of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board actions against the industry—including issuing of closure notices—for not preparing extended producers responsibility (EPR) plan. Since the plastic ban came into effect, manufacturers must have submitted the EPR plan, including modalities of a waste collection, to the government by September-end.

A source in the association said a letter was sent to the dairy industry on November 21 communicating the decision. However, milk producers in Mumbai said they have yet to receive word about the strike. Mandakini Khadse, chairperson of Mahanand Dairy, said, "How will milk be packaged if plastic pouches become unavailable?" The Milk Producers and Processors' Welfare Association said if the government did not pull dairies and milk packets out of the EPR's ambit, dairies will have to stop packing milk in plastic pouches. It had called a meeting of 58 private and cooperative dairies on Thursday to discuss the issue.

Arjun Khotkar, junior minister for animal husbandry and dairy development, said, "We will hold a meeting with dairies on Monday. If plastic films are not supplied, we will discuss alternatives."

DAIRIES USUALLY HAVE STOCKS TO LAST 10-12 DAYS

EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

➤ It's the responsibility of "producers of packaging products and branded consumer goods" to dispose of plastic packaging waste



➤ Consumer goods companies, packaging material manufacturers and waste paper recycling mills responsible for disposal of plastic waste generated by them

➤ Firms must submit EPR plan—which includes modalities of a waste collection—to govt



DELAY IN EPR

➤ Production of plastic packaging material not allowed without EPR plan, registration number

➤ Plastic manufacturers yet to prepare EPR plan

➤ Deadline to prepare EPR

plans expired on Sept 30

➤ Manufacturers say they need clear guidelines from MPCB to prepare EPR

➤ MPCB says that it expects industry to come up with its own EPR model

