



**National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM)**

An Institute of National Importance (INI) under Ministry of Food Processing Industries, GOI,  
Plot No 97, Sector-56, HSIIDC Industrial Estate, Kundli-131028, District-Sonepat (Haryana)

**EOI No. N/DE/R/2024/103/33**

**Date: 20.11.2024**

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**

**SUBJECT: EOI FOR THIRD PARTY AUDIT OF FORTIFIED RICE KERNEL / PREMIX MANUFACTURERS.**

**1. About NIFTEM-K**

NIFTEM-Kundli (Institute of National Importance) is a premier academic and research institution under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India. It is dedicated to advancing food technology, entrepreneurship, and management. The institute's state-of-the-art facilities and innovative research focus on bridging gaps between academic knowledge and industry requirements to create solutions that address food safety, sustainability, and global competitiveness.

**2. Background**

Rice fortification, a process of adding micronutrients like iron, folic acid, and vitamin B12, is an effective, preventive, and cost-efficient complementary strategy to address the nutrition problem by making it more nutritious. Considering that rice is the staple food for approximately 65 percent of the Indian population, fortification has the potential to significantly impact public health, particularly among vulnerable and economically disadvantaged communities, including those benefiting from government safety net programs.

The Government of India has recognized the significance of fortified rice as a flagship program in combating malnutrition and improving public health. The Food and Civil Supplies Departments of various states empanel rice millers and Fortified Rice Kernel (FRK) Manufacturers to supply fortified rice to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and states Go-downs, which, in turn, distributes it to social safety net schemes.

There are growing concerns about the quality and safety of Premix & Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) manufactured in the country, particularly in major CMR States (Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh & Chhattisgarh). The field visits and observations have revealed a notable lack of compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Hygiene Practices (GHP)

among FRK & Premix manufacturers. Additionally, substandard raw materials in premixes result in substandard FRK that fails to meet the quality norms set by FSSAI.

To address these concerns and uphold the integrity of the Fortified Rice supply chain, NIFTEM proposes to conduct a Third-party Audit of Fortified Rice Kernel Manufacturers in above-mentioned states, having significant number of FRK Manufacturers supplying substantial quantities of FRK across the country.

The objective of this audit is to thoroughly assess the compliance of FRK/ Premix manufacturers with FSSAI Schedule-IV requirements, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), Micronutrient levels, and other relevant quality norms established by the FSSAI. By conducting this audit in partnership with FSSAI-approved agencies, NIFTEM aims to ensure transparency, credibility, and impartial evaluation of the manufacturers' operations.

The results of the third-party audit will provide valuable insights of FRK manufacturing, helping identify areas for improvement. Moreover, the audit will facilitate the implementation of a rating system based on the audit findings, encouraging manufacturers to continually enhance their practices.

**Objective:** The primary objective of the Third-party Food Safety Audit is to assess and evaluate the compliance of FRK/ Premix manufacturers with FSSAI Schedule-IV requirements, GMP, GHP, Micronutrient level, and other relevant quality norms. The audit aims to address concerns related to non-compliance and poor quality FRK/ Premix production while ensuring impartiality and transparency.

### 3. Eligibility

#### 1. Identification of Potential Audit Agencies:

To ensure an unbiased and transparent audit process, the identification and shortlisting of the audit agencies will be carried out based on a comprehensive evaluation process. The following criteria will be used to assess potential agencies:

a. **Accreditation:** Preference will be given to agencies accredited by relevant national or international bodies for food safety auditing. The Agency shall be recognized as 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit agency by FSSAI. Weightage will be given to NABCB registered agencies.

b. **Expertise:** Agencies with a proven track record in conducting food safety audits, particularly in the field of fortified/extruded foods, will be considered. Experience of more than 5 Years as NABCB approved certification body for FSMS in the required category will be an added advantage.

c. **Technical Competence:** The technical expertise and qualifications of the auditors employed by the agencies will be evaluated. The certification body/auditing agency should have a minimum of 5 FSMS (ISO 22000:2018) approved auditors in the applicable category

fortified/extruded foods with Geographical presence i.e. minimum 1 office in North, South, East & west of India.

d. **Past Performance:** The agencies' history of conducting similar audits and their performance in ensuring food safety compliance will be assessed.

#### **4. Shortlisting Process:**

A screening committee comprising representatives of NIFTEM will be formed to assess the proposal of audit agencies based on the above criteria. After a thorough evaluation, the agencies will be shortlisted and invited to participate in the audit process. NIFTEM-K may engage agencies as per the requirement.

**5. Scope of Work:** The scope of the Third-party Food Safety Audit will encompass the following aspects:

1. Evaluation of Infrastructure: Assessing the compliance of FRK / Premix manufacturers' infrastructure with FSSAI Schedule-IV requirements, including manufacturing facilities, storage, and handling practices.
2. Verification of Nutrient Premixes: Verifying the use of standard quality nutrient premixes as per FSSAI guidelines and validating the authenticity/ traceability of raw material sources.
3. Quality Control Measures: Assessing the overall quality control measures implemented by the manufacturers to produce fortified rice kernels / Premix.
4. Compliance with GMP and GHP: Ensuring that the manufacturers adhere to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) to maintain food safety and hygiene standards using 3<sup>rd</sup> Party audit checklist from FSSAI for FRK and Premix manufacturing.
5. Sampling: Sampling of FRK and Premix along with the relevant raw materials used in manufacturing process of FRK/Premix to be submitted to NIFTEM for analysis as per FSSAI requirement.
6. Impartiality and Transparency: Ensuring that the audit process is conducted with complete impartiality and transparency, free from any undue influence from the manufacturers.

#### **6. Deliverables:**

1. Third-party Food Safety Audit: Conducting the audit of FRK Premix manufacturers in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh covering the specified scope of work and objectives.
2. Sampling of Finish Good FRK/Premix along with the relevant raw materials used in manufacturing process of FRK/Premix to be submitted to NIFTEM for analysis as per

FSSAI requirement. The auditors will be trained by NIFTEM team on sampling protocols during orientation program after empanelment.

3. Audit Report: Preparing a comprehensive audit report that includes findings, observations, identified non-compliances, and recommendations for improvement.
4. Rating System: Developing an impartial rating system to assess the performance of each FRK manufacturer based on the audit results.
5. Sharing Observations: Sharing all audit observations, ratings, and reports with NIFTEM/FSSAI to facilitate appropriate actions, policy improvements, and continual enhancement of food safety standards.
6. Continual Improvement: Promoting continual improvement among FRK manufacturers based on the audit ratings, aiming to enhance the overall quality of fortified rice available to beneficiaries.
7. Collaboration and Guidance: Providing support and collaboration throughout the audit process to ensure the success and effectiveness of the initiative.

## 7. Professional Fee (Fixed Rates)

S. No.	Item	Amount (in Rs.)
1.	Consultancy Charges per Audit per FRK	15,000.00
2.	Travel Entitlement: By Air – Economy Class By Train – AC 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class By Road – Rs. 14/- per km.	As per entitlement (to be reimbursed)
3.	Accommodation	2,812.50
4.	Daily Allowance	1,125.00

## 8. Timeline

The duration of the Third-Party Audit is 3 Months from the date of assignment. So, if the TPA is planned to start in January-2025 it should be completed by March 2025.

## 9. Payment plan

Payment to be done in 4 tranches.

S No	Particulars	Payment
1	Contracting FSSAI-approved audit agencies for FRK/ Premix quality audits	20% of the contract amount
2	Initiation of Quality rating auditing of FRK/ Premix units	35 % of the contract amount
3	Completion of Quality rating auditing of FRK/ Premix units	35 % of the contract amount
4	Submission of Quality Audit reports to NIFTEM/ FSSAI	10 % of the contract amount

**10. Submission Instructions:** All proposals must be emailed to the address below with your proposal attached in one or more files (PDF preferred). DO NOT email your proposal to any employee of NIFTEM. Failing to adhere to these instructions may make your proposal ineligible for consideration.

**11. Order of Events:** This EoI will be administered in accordance with the following dates (subject to change at NIFTEM's sole discretion):

Activity	Date and time
Expression of Interest (EoI) released	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Deadline for submission of proposal in response to the EoI	1st December 2024
Outcome communication	5th December 2024
Award decision (to be followed by contract negotiations)	10th December 2024

**Interested Audit agency are invited to submit their detailed proposals by 1st December 2024 via email to [purchase.niftem@gmail.com](mailto:purchase.niftem@gmail.com)**

*The proposal should include a cover letter, detailed methodology, timeline, bio-data of auditor, relevant experience, and a financial proposal.*

## 12. Terms and Conditions:

- The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by NIFTEM.
- All responses must be received on or before the date indicated on the EoI. All late responses will be rejected.
- All proposals will be considered binding offers. Your proposal must be valid for acceptance for a minimum period of 90 days from the closing date of this solicitation.
- All awards will be subject to NIFTEM contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
- NIFTEM reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, without assigning any reason, and shall have no liability to any vendors submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the EoI.
- NIFTEM reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when awarding the purchase order/contract.
- All information provided by NIFTEM in this EoI is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time and all known intended bidders will be provided with notification of any changes.
- NIFTEM reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
- Bidders are solely obligated to pay for all costs which may be incurred by the bidder or any third parties in connection with preparing the proposal.
- All proposals and supporting documentation shall become the property of NIFTEM and shall be treated confidentially.
- Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

## 13. For further clarification regarding this EoI document, please contact:

### Purchase related queries:

Purchase Division

NIFTEM, Kundli, Sonapat (Haryana)-131028

Phone No. - 0130-2281057

E-mail ID - [purchase.niftem@gmail.com](mailto:purchase.niftem@gmail.com)

### Technical queries:

Dr. Komal Chauhan

Dean (R&D) & Professor, (FST)

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**(Registrar, NIFTEM)**