

A Review of *Ayurveda Aahar*: Regulations, Challenges, and Future Prospects

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Abstract: This article examines the concept of *Ayurveda Aahara* as a foundational element of health, drawing from classical Ayurvedic literature, contemporary research, and recent regulatory developments. It discusses the philosophical and nutritional basis of *Aahara*, its relevance to nourishment and balanced living, and its distinction from modern nutritional approaches. The study reviews the 2022 *Ayurveda Aahara* regulations introduced under the Food Safety and Standards framework, highlighting their role in supporting traditional food systems and expanding the scope of *Ayurveda*-based dietary practices. Key challenges related to regulation, supply chains, resource use, market development, and export barriers are also addressed. The article further considers the potential of *Ayurveda Aahara* in supporting public health, responding to rising interest in traditional food systems, and contributing to sustainable and personalized nutrition through evidence-based integration.

Keywords: *Ayurveda Aahara*, traditional nutrition, food regulation, public health, nutrigenomics

1. Introduction

Aahara or food constitutes an essential prerequisite for the sustenance of all living organisms. Consequently, the knowledge of life, that is, *Ayurveda* has delineated *Aahara* as one of the triadic foundations, that is, *Aahara* (food), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) upon which our life is upheld.

[1] Going through its etymology, anything which is swallowed is considered as *Aahara*.

[2] and includes solid, and liquid substances.

[3] “*Anna*” is another word which is used synonymously with “*Aahara*” in respect of food.

However, *Acharya Charaka* described “*Annam vrittikaranam*”.

[4] which may be understood as *Aahara* is the fundamental requirement for the sustenance of the body, and the term “*vritti*” indicates nourishment and growth of the body.

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of proper diet, digestion, and lifestyle for maintaining balance and health. However, *Ayurveda* principles and practices on health, food, and nutrition differ from those of biomedicine and modern nutrition.

2. Materials and Methods

Classical texts of *Ayurveda*, such as *Charaka Samhita* and *Bhavaprakasha*, were searched for references to *Aahara*. Classical *Ayurveda* texts, modern scientific research on *Ayurveda* nutrition, and existing regulations on *AA* and nutraceuticals have been included in this study, while unrelated to *Ayurveda* or non-peer-reviewed publications were excluded. The study aimed to include both classical texts and modern research to provide a holistic view of *AA*.

Furthermore, existing regulatory provisions for food, *AA*, and nutraceuticals, as well as online reports available in the public

domain have also been reviewed in this study. Various databases and search engines, such as PubMed and Google Scholar, were explored using the keywords “*Ayurveda Aahara*,” “*Ayurveda Aahara regulation*,” and “*traditional food*” to identify existing research and initiatives related to *AA*.

Ayurveda Aahar regulation, 2022

Despite allowing a large number of botanicals under the nutraceutical category, the non-availability of commercial products on *Ayurveda* dietary prescriptions and considering the importance and increasing global awareness and demand of various dietary regimes described in *Ayurveda*, a separate category to promote *Ayurveda* food was envisaged and FSSAI in collaboration with Ministry of Ayush and had published *AA* regulations in the year 2022. These regulations have been made under the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006. FSS Act defines food as any substance, either processed or unprocessed, intended for human consumption. It includes primary food, genetically modified or engineered food, etc. It excludes animal feed, plants before harvesting, drugs and medicinal products, cosmetics, and narcotic or psychotropic substances.

AA is defined as food prepared according to the recipes, ingredients, or procedures described in the authoritative books of *Ayurveda*. Similar to the definition of “food,” *AA* excludes *Ayurveda* drugs/medicines and medicinal products, cosmetics, narcotic or psychotropic substances, drugs listed under Schedule E-1 of Drug and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and rules, there under, metals-based *Ayurveda* drugs or medicines, *bhasma* (~incinerated metals) or *pishti*, etc.

3. Challenges

In the food sector, several critical challenges impact overall efficiency and sustainability. Effective management of the supply chain is essential, encompassing storage infrastructure and transportation logistics to ensure product quality and reduce spoilage.

Regulatory impediments often hinder progress, necessitating compliance with complex and varied standards. Enhancing capacity and developing skills within the workforce are vital for maintaining competitive advantage and fostering innovation.

Resource management presents its own set of challenges, including optimizing agricultural practices, addressing environmental concerns, and implementing waste management strategies. Marketing strategies and product branding are crucial for market differentiation and consumer engagement.

Additionally, obstacles to exportation, including trade barriers and logistical constraints, can limit market access and growth opportunities. Addressing these issues often requires leveraging advancements in technology to streamline operations and improve efficiency.

4. Conclusion

AA holds significant promise in addressing global health trends and consumer demand for traditional and holistic food options. The regulatory provisions established by the FSSAI provide a framework for integrating Ayurveda nutritional principles into current food systems. Strengthening regulatory standards, enhancing quality control, and increasing consumer awareness could be key steps for the acceptance of the therapeutic potential of *AA*. Furthermore, evidence-based validation and exploring the interaction between Ayurvedic nutrition and genetics, that is, *Ayurnutrigenomics* can enable *AA* to become a key player in global food systems while improving public health outcomes and sustainability. *AA* can also play a crucial role in public health in managing lifestyle-related diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions, by promoting balanced, personalized, and nutrient-dense diets to specific health needs.

As global interest in traditional foods grows, *AA* is well-positioned to play a pivotal role in promoting health and well-being through its ancient and time-tested principles. Additionally, it can strengthen Indian culture and contribute to the global food landscape while promoting health and well-being.