



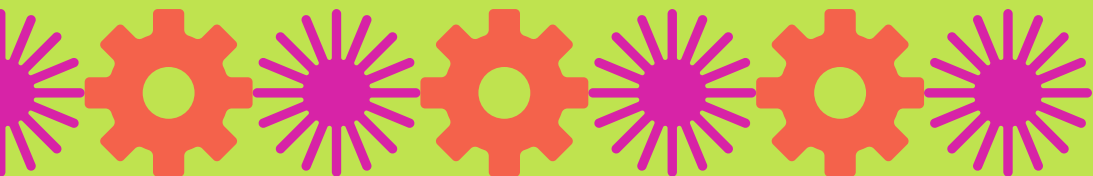
Millers
for
Nutrition



Case Study

Kaleesuwari Refinery Private Ltd.

Fortifying for "A Million
Mothers' Trust" in India



Summary

Kaleesuwari Refinery Private Ltd. is a leading edible oil producer based in southern India that treats food fortification as a core, integrity-driven commitment. This commitment is reflected in a voluntary shift to an in-house blend of individual vitamins to ensure higher product quality, as well as in an automated inline dosing system to reduce product variability – an issue often left unaddressed by competitors.

These fortification systems and processes go beyond industry standards and play a central role in strengthen Kaleesuwari's brand. They underpin the company's ambition to fortify "a million mothers' trust," which CEO Cheran K. describes as the foundation of Kaleesuwari's business model.

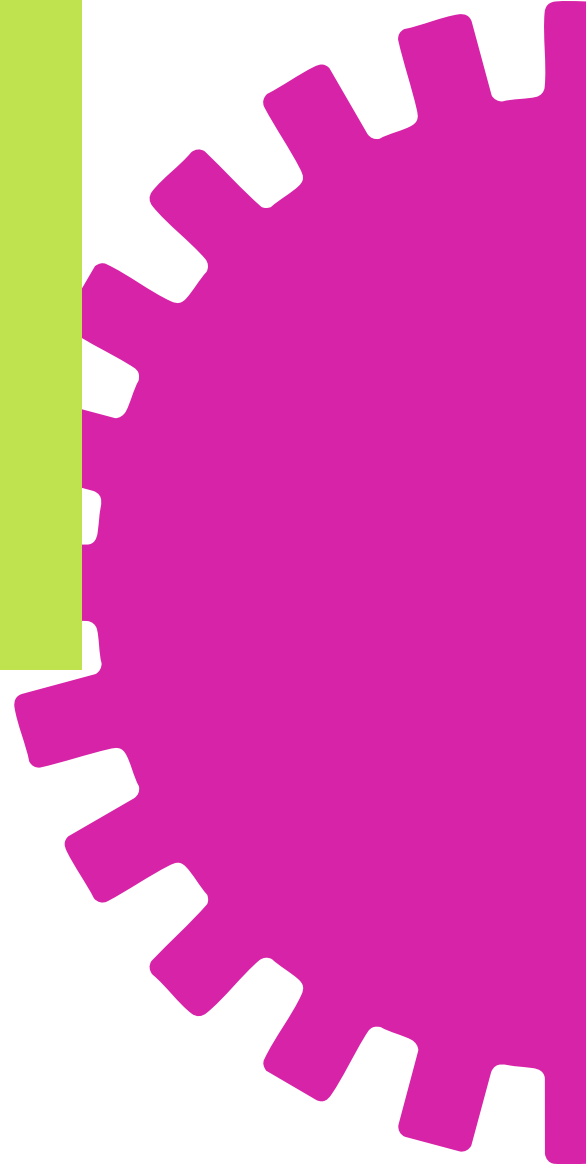




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A Company Brand Centering Trust in the Business Model



“The customer has to feel the trust...it's a million mothers' trust.”

Cheran K.
CEO of Kaleesuwari Refinery and Industry Pvt. Ltd.

Kaleesuwari operates predominantly in the branded edible oil segment in southern India, with its fortified Gold Winner sunflower oil as its core product. Annual sunflower oil volumes typically range between 300,000 and 400,000 tons, with 80–90% sold under branded retail formats. While much of the industry does not fortify bulk oil, Kaleesuwari includes this segment as part of its consumer-facing responsibility across all package sizes.

This positioning matters. In a branded market, repeat purchases depend less on price arbitrage and more on credibility, consistency and reputation. Kaleesuwari's leadership team, led by CEO Cheran K., frames fortification decisions in these terms: once nutrition is printed on the package, the company owns the obligation, regardless of whether the market or regulator enforces it. Internally, this philosophy is captured in a phrase that guides product decisions across teams:

Since committing to fortification in 2016, the company has worked to fulfil its promise to customers, positioning itself as worthy of their continued trust. This commitment has translated into market leadership, with Kaleesuwari offering fortified refined sunflower oil as a health-oriented product at the time when no other oil brand had introduced fortification and no government mandate was in place.

Picture: Kaleesuwari's fortified refined sunflower oil, positioned as a health-oriented product, available in 1 liter, 1.8 liter, and 5 liter packs



Fortification Above and Beyond the Standard: In-House Blending at Double the Cost



Over the last decade, Kaleesuwari has invested in fortification systems and processes that go beyond common industry practice. The most consequential shift in the company's fortification strategy was triggered by testing results that challenged a core assumption.

The company had been purchasing premix from external suppliers, dosing it correctly, and verifying samples provided alongside shipments. On paper, the system appeared sound. However, independent testing of commercial lots and market samples, enabled by the Millers for Nutrition Coalition, revealed vitamin levels below dosed levels.

The initial response was internal scrutiny: re-checking dosing, staff practices and sampling procedures. When results remained inconsistent, the pattern became clear. Suppliers could provide compliant samples while commercial deliveries fell short.

The realization was stark. Kaleesuwari was paying for fortification it could not reliably verify, unknowingly putting its brand promise at risk. With support from experts in the Millers for Nutrition Coalition, the company used this moment to reassess its approach. Rather than switching suppliers or increasing spot checks indefinitely, Kaleesuwari made a structural decision: it would stop purchasing premix altogether.

Instead, the company began sourcing vitamins A and D individually and blending them in-house, gaining full control over ratios, dosing, and traceability. This shift immediately increased costs, nearly doubling input expenses for fortification, but it removed a fundamental integrity risk from the system.

“If we declare it, we must live by it.”

Cheran K.
CEO of Kaleesuwari Refinery and Industry Pvt. Ltd.

This decision reflects the company's guiding rule on fortification:

“If we declare it, we must live by it.”

Cheran K. CEO of Kaleesuwari Refinery and Industry Pvt. Ltd.

From Kaleesuwari's perspective, the trade-off was clear. In a market where consumers cannot verify micronutrient levels themselves and regulatory testing is limited, the real asset



at stake is credibility. Losing trust would be far more costly than absorbing higher input expenses.



Picture: Dosing equipment for vitamin A and D in one of Kaleesuwari's oil processing plants

Engineering Integrity: Consistency Beyond Standard Practice

Kaleesuwari has been fortifying edible oil since 2016, well before fortification became common in the industry. This early commitment continues to shape how the company approaches fortification today.

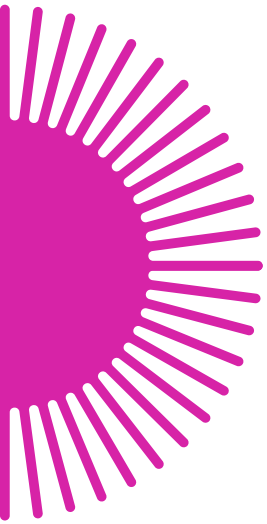
A central operational risk in edible oil fortification is uneven vitamin distribution. Industry-standard practice typically involves adding premix to large storage tanks and relying on mixing and process discipline to achieve uniformity, which can result in inconsistent vitamin distribution.

Kaleesuwari deliberately chose a different approach. Instead of dosing vitamins into storage tanks, the company invested in an automated inline dosing system that adds vitamins directly into the oil flow after refining. This decision was guided by a simple question: if a consumer buys a one-liter pouch, will it contain what the label promises?

The objective was not sophistication for its own sake, but control. This method reduces variability and ensures a more consistent distribution of vitamins across final packages. By reworking a core industry process, Kaleesuwari demonstrates its commitment to delivering consistent quality and fortification across all package sizes. This approach has also been recognized by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, which visited the company to observe the dosing process in practice.

Kaleesuwari applies fortification across all package sizes, from one-liter pouches to 15-liter bulk tins. In the absence





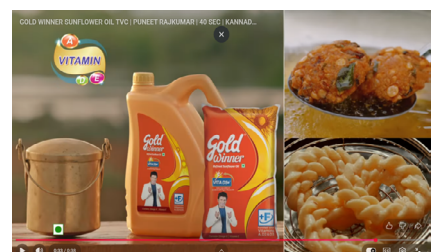
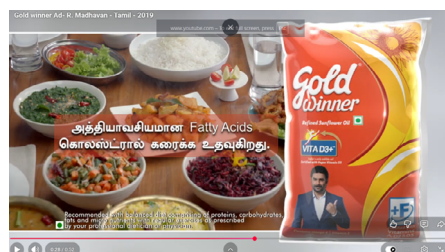
of a fortification mandate, larger formats are often where producers reduce or avoid fortification due to cost sensitivity and lower scrutiny. From Kaleesuware's perspective, this creates a blind spot in nutrition impact, as high-consumption channels such as institutional buyers and food service rely heavily on larger packages.

Rather than segmenting responsibility by pack size, Kaleesuware takes a uniform approach. If oil leaves the factory under its brand, it is fortified regardless of volume. Through this practice, the company not only strengthens its reputation and credibility but also contributes directly to addressing malnutrition on a commercial level at scale.

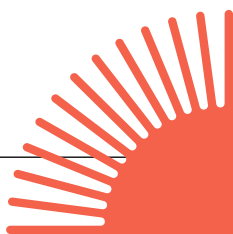
Investing in Food Fortification Through Consumer Education and Sensitivity

Kaleesuware has invested in consumer education through print and visual media for over a decade, including more than 100 campaigns highlighting the benefits of vitamin A and D. Drawing on this experience, the company prioritizes consistent, repeated messaging over technical detail across packaging, advertising, distributor engagement and retailer communication. This consistency is especially important in an environment shaped by micro-influencers, where online reviews and word-of-mouth play a growing role. Communication around fortified products must therefore remain clear and accurate to withstand scrutiny. The objective is to reinforce a simple expectation: fortified oil should reliably contain what it claims—and Kaleesuware delivers on this promise.

At the same time, Kaleesuware recognizes the limits of marketing in a category where purchasing decisions are often habitual and price-sensitive. Its efforts are guided by a strong focus on affordability. Any additional costs associated with fortification are not passed on to consumers, ensuring that Kaleesuware products remain price-competitive. The company's leadership is clear that nutrition innovation must deliver real benefits without turning fortified oil into a premium niche product.



Pictures: Examples of Kaleesuware's consumer-facing advertising





Looking Ahead: Fortification and Trust Throughout Kaleesuware's DNA

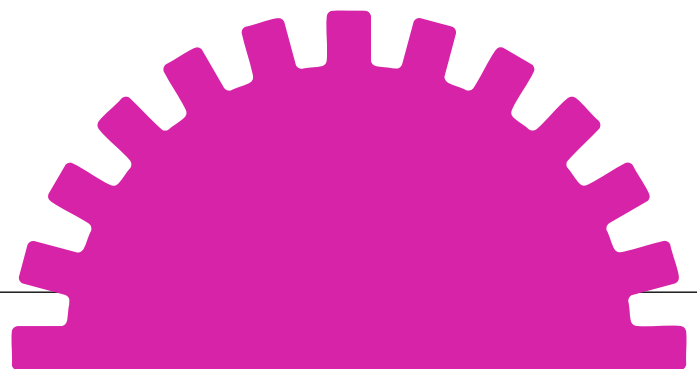


“Innovation and continual improvement are integral parts of our organizational DNA”

Cheran K.
CEO of Kaleesuware Refinery and Industry Pvt. Ltd.

Kaleesuware does not view fortification as a finished agenda. The company is working closely with the Millers for Nutrition Coalition to explore opportunities to expand its fortification to additional nutrients beyond vitamins A, D and E. It is also assessing whether packaging materials affect vitamin retention over shelf life and exploring how more accessible testing infrastructure could strengthen sector-wide integrity.

These forward-looking efforts reflect a broader lesson from Kaleesuware's experience: fortification only creates value when integrity is intentionally engineered rather than assumed. When consumers cannot verify nutrition claims and regulatory testing is limited, trust becomes the product itself. Kaleesuware has chosen to invest deliberately in protecting that trust at the center of its business model.



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