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FSSAI to make training and certification mandatory for food service sector

To come out with 'Hygiene Rating System' for Food businesses soon

HBI Staff | New Delhi

As the eco-system for training and certification for the food service businesses under the Food Safety standards in the country is getting on track and industry associations and stakeholders are showing interest to be involved with the system, the food regulator, Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is mulling, making training and certification mandatory over the next one year. As per FSSAI estimates, they have been able to conduct over 800 training sessions across the country with the support of the industry associations whereby an estimated 16 to 18,000 people have been trained and certified as Food Safety Supervisors. FSSAI has 120 empowered partners through which they deliver training and certification to the stakeholders.

Addressing the media here in Delhi, Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI said that it will be made mandatory to have at least one certified food safety supervisor in a licenced food unit. He said that the same will be implemented in a phased manner starting with Central licencees, high-risk food businesses, etc. over the next one year time. "Eventually, it will become mandatory to every business," he said. He said that it will also be made part of the annual returns format on the FLRS IT platform for businesses which is currently being reworked. "This single measure will have the potential to change the food safety compliance system in the country," he said.

Considering vast number of complaints associated with food service businesses are concerning "hygiene", Agarwal said that the Authority is in the anvil of introducing a "Hygiene Rating" system for Food service businesses in the country. He said that the framework of the same is ready and the challenge before them is in identifying a credible agency to implement it. He expected such a rating would drive competition among the operators to take hygiene standards seriously and get a higher rating than his competitors.

Talking about Street Food, Agarwal said that the effort has been to involve governments and different levels, tourism department, etc. to identify places where model "street food hubs" can be created. He said that civic agencies will analyse the gaps in terms of

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infrastructure and other issues, and will help fill those gaps so that such hubs can come up at few places. He expressed the hope that at least few model street food hubs come up in the next six-months time.