



Food operators warned on artificial ripening of fruits

06 APR 2018

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PANJIM: Food & Drugs Administration (FDA) has warned food business operators of penal action for indulging in artificial ripening of fruits using chemicals.

FDA officials stated they have come across instances wherein agricultural chemicals like ethapone, etherel etc are being used to ripen fruits like mango, banana and other seasonal fruits. "Such practice is commonly adopted when the demand for fruits is on the higher side. In view of such malpractice FDA has warned all operators in trade of fruits to refrain from using such harmful chemicals for artificial ripening of fruits," an official said.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has released an advisory wherein the use of ethapone, carbide etc for artificial ripening is strictly prohibited and hence FDA will engage in special drives to check for use of such chemicals. "Any vendor found using such chemicals or found in possession of such chemicals will be dealt with seriously as per the penal provision of law," the official said adding that the FSSAI has permitted artificial ripening by use of ethylene gas at a concentration up to 100 ppm depending on the crop, variety and maturity through ethylene gas chambers which are licensed/registered under the Food Safety and Standard Act 2006.