

Dated: 15.05.2018 (Tuesday)

E-paper

Food regulator finds antibiotic resistance in animal food KANIZA GARARI

Doctors say even 3rd generation antibiotics are not working in some patients, making their treatment difficult.

Hyderabad: Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has stated that allergic reactions and long-term resistance to antibiotics found in humans are caused by drug residues in animal products like muscle, liver, kidney and milk. The FSSAI has insisted that packaged frozen and live products be tested before being sent to the market.

These products are suspected to contain residues of medicines that are meant for human consumption, pesticides and veterinary drugs. The US FDA has listed the chemicals which are found in animal products and stated that each country must work towards controlling them. With the food industry in India growing at 17 per cent, the FSSAI wants laboratory tests conducted on animal products by the organised food sector; products from the unorganised sector must be randomly tested by state food inspectors.

The chemicals that have been listed as drug residues of veterinary antibiotics are cholramphenicol and beta lactams. Pesticide residues like organophosphates, carbamates, chlorinated hydrocarbons and prethroids are also found in animal products.

A food inspector on condition of anonymity explained, "There are many growth hormones which are given to animals and the use is rampant. But to check this, there has to be a co-ordinated effort where all the three wings, the drug department, food and veterinary, must come together. Presently, it is working in isolation and the effect is not as desired."

While the use in chicken and meat was widely reported after tests carried out by the Centre for Science and Environment, there have not been any regulations so far. Food analyst P Shastry explained "Chicken and other dairy animals are prone to diseases as they are kept together in groups. The antibiotics are used to control the diseases, but their abuse has to be restricted. There is also a demand for alternative and safe feed to tackle diseases in animals and birds." FSSAI is demanding that veterinary doctors must visit the farms to administer the medicines and help control the misuse of antibiotics.

Dr Dinesh Vohra, senior critical care specialist explained "The effect of this misuse is seen while treating critical patients as the highest levels of antibiotics have to be used.

FSSAI IN NEWS

There are patients on whom the second, and even third generation antibiotics, are not found to work, making treatment extremely difficult. For this reason, identifying the drugs and controlling their use is most important.”

It has been noted that often the drug chemicals gets concentrated in animal food and despite heavy cooking, there is still a high concentration found. In India, FSSAI is now insisting on maintaining a manual of the drugs and identifying a list of chemicals which are found as residues. Experts state that this will pave the way for gauging their use in the dairy, poultry, animal and fish industry and accordingly control the production.