

THE TIMES OF INDIA

With 60% shops in dist under food safety ambit, feel free to eat out

TNN | Jun 16, 2018, 00:30 IST

Coimbatore: Thanks to the effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) act, more people are having safe and hygienic food in the district.

The number of food business operators registered or licensed by the food safety department has increased almost three-fold. According to the officials of the department, besides restaurants, bakeries and snacks manufacturers, they have also brought many home bakers and home-based catering services under the food safety ambit.

The number of food businesses registered under the FSSAI act in the district has gone up from less than 6,000 outlets in last October to 17,000 as of this week, designated food safety officer Vijayalalithambigai said. “There are about 29,000 food business operators, which means we have managed to achieve at least 60% compliance. The compliance is higher among licensees or business operators with a turnover of more than Rs 12 lakh. Smaller businesses have to catch up,” she told TOI.

Food safety officials have been educating owners of new shops and eateries about rules regarding use of oil, water, packaging and serving material when they apply for registration. “We tell them not to use newspapers or printed papers to serve food and also against reusing cooking oil and artificial colours. We educate them about ways to store raw materials. We have also told them not to buy cheap tea and coffee powder and even milk, because that may be adulterated. As a result, the quality of food they offer has gone up,” a food safety officer said.

In the last three days, the department had issued notices to 19 food business operators and nine small shops, asking them to obtain licenses under FSSAI.

The officials said that while compliance within the corporation limits is high, more units in rural areas need to be brought under its ambit. “In places like Valparai, the compliance is hardly 50%, because of the terrain and the fact that many estates and homes run homestays there offer food,” Vijayalalithambigai added.