

New FSSAI bamboo guidelines bring clarity on use in spoons, fork, cups

Wednesday, 11 September, 2019

Ashwani Maindola, New Delhi

The apex food regulator, FSSAI, has issued guidelines for using bamboo as food contact material, these need to be followed in manufacturing, handling and using of bamboo items such as spoons, fork, knife, straw, stirrer and cups.

The advisory issued by FSSAI says that the Scientific Committee on Food Additive, Processing Aids and Material in Contact with Foods, and Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards have examined the safety aspects of the food contact material manufactured from bamboo and observed that there is no reported literature available regarding contamination of food from use of such utensils made from bamboo.

The advisory states, "Their use as food contact materials if manufactured and maintained under hygienic conditions are safe."

The guidelines say that the final products manufactured from bamboo shall comply with the minimum requirement such as the tools should have a smooth surface free from dirt, off odour and colouration, free from chemical contaminants and microbial pathogens. They must be durable and reusable having good shelf life.

The advisory also adds that the advertisement of such tools shall not mislead the consumers and shall be consistent with the actual composition of the products.

FSSAI has further directed the manufacturers of bamboo food contact items that such material shall be manufactured and handled under hygienic conditions so as to prevent any physical, chemical and microbial contamination. And it should only be made from edible bamboo varieties and shall not contain any material in combination with bamboo while it should be disinfected in salt, neem and boiling water.

The advisory says that good hygiene practices shall be followed at each and every step of manufacturing, handling and storage of these food contact materials.