

Telangana alerted about formalin on fish

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FSSAI asks all states to set up labs to test fish for the chemical.



Traders are asked not to use additives and chemicals to prolong shelf life of fish.

Hyderabad: The state government has to set up a laboratory to check for the adulterant formalin in fish.

Cases of formalin in fish were found in Assam, Odisha and Kochi and this has led Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to issue guidelines to check on the use of formalin to preserve fish.

The FSSAI also wants all states to have a laboratory to test fish for the presence of formalin. Formalin is used by traders and suppliers to extend the shelf life of both fresh and frozen fish. The World Health Organisation and International Agency for Research on Cancer of the United Nations have confirmed that formaldehyde is carcinogenic and is found to cause nasopharyngeal cancer (upper part of the throat and behind the nose).

When present in large quantities, it can also lead to severe abdominal pain, vomiting, coma, renal injury and even death.

Dr Suvarna Chandrapp-agari, the commissioner of fisheries, explained, "We do not have aquaculture ponds in TS and consumers are used to eating fresh fish. The fish comes within three to four hours from coastal Andhra Pradesh."

She said the FSSAI had stated that a laboratory has to be set up to test fish for formalin. “We are going to do that as it is important from the health perspective of consumers,” she said.

The consumption of fish is highest in Telangana with 150 tonnes on weekdays and 400 to 500 tonnes on weekends.