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Health Department to allocate hygiene rating



Delivery boys of an online food ordering firm in Jalandhar. Photo: Sarabjit Singh

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The Health Department will shortly allocate hygiene rating to all food business operators (FBOs) associated with online food order companies to ensure that food packets received by customers are of good quality and safe to consume.

Besides, it will tighten the noose around all online food delivery companies to make sure that the hygiene rating had been displayed for the consumers before receiving their orders. Four categories of ratings; 5 star, 4 star, 3 star and 2 stars will be mentioned on the food packets and these ratings will be decided on the marks scored by the FBO's. 5 star would signify 81-100 marks (very good quality). 4 star; 61-80 marks (Good quality), 3 star; 41-60 marks (Fair quality) and 2 star; 21-40 marks (poor quality, that needs improvement). The hygiene ratings will be judged on the parameters of availability of gloves, aprons and other safe cooking measures. No stagnant water around the cooking area, proper drainage system and First In First Out (FIFO) mechanism to be adopted by the FBOs.

Dr Harjot Pal Singh, Assistant Commissioner For Food and Drug Administration (FDA), said: "The initiative will be taken in response to the guidelines issued by the State Health Minister, that 'No online food order is to be delivered in the state without hygiene rating' and for implementing the same, the regional auditors of Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) would issue the hygiene ratings to the FBO's."

"Further, the process for the same will be conducted within 90 days and every online food delivery company should make sure that the food they are delivering should display the hygiene rating of all FBOs registered or affiliated to them," he added.

Besides the quality food assurance is one of the agenda of Tandrust Punjab Mission.

Harjot Pal Singh said: "All FBOs and the delivery companies should possess FSSAI licence or registration ID. The online order and delivery mechanism of food supply has been disconnected the link between the consumer and the food maker."

" Hence, the onus of ensuring the quality of food and the hygienic condition under which the food is prepared, has been shifted to the intermediate food delivery mechanism. Therefore the hygiene ratings will safeguard the quality of food delivered through online delivery mode," added Pal Singh.