



CSR: Food Safety Norms In Online Delivery

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Regulator FSSAI has given a two-week deadline to online food delivery companies to delist unlicensed restaurants. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has also decided to conduct audit of online platforms of food aggregators to check if they are complying with food safety and hygiene norms, it said in a statement.

In a review meeting held on August 1, 2018, the regulator found that more than 30%-40% of food businesses listed on the online platforms like Swiggy, Zomato and UberEats do not possess a valid licence despite the companies being told to comply with the norms by July-end, reports PTI.

To ensure compliance of the food safety norms, the regulator has given “two-weeks time to these food aggregators” to delist unlicensed/unregistered food businesses and submit a detailed report, FSSAI CEO Pawan Agarwal told PTI.

“This is part of a special drive by the regulator to bring in all food businesses under the FSSAI licensing regime and ensure compliance of the food safety laws,” he said.

The FSSAI had recently notified regulations bringing e-commerce aggregator platforms within the purview of the food safety law. He hoped that these platforms will now begin to take food safety seriously from a regulatory standpoint.

Food delivery apps need to use some of their resources in training and capacity building of restaurants for improving food safety and hygiene rather than focusing only on deep discounts and aggressive marketing. They were advised to display FSSAI license number along with name and location of the restaurants.

Government agencies like FSSAI are responsible for setting food safety standards, conducting inspections, ensuring that standards are met, and maintaining a strong enforcement program to deal with those who do not comply with standards.

In some countries, such as the UK, authorities issue hygiene ratings that are made public or even displayed on the front of the premises, which can improve or damage business reputations, and provides added incentive to produce food of high quality.

In the EU the main legislation controlling food safety practices is Regulation (EC) on the hygiene of foodstuffs, which is the basis for each member country's local regulations. Australia and New Zealand are governed by the Food Standards Code.

Pulling food delivery apps up for ignoring food safety and hygiene norms is one step towards food regulations on par with international standards.

