

## **FSSAI initiates drive to discourage use of staple pins on food packets**

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has sent letters addressed to Commissioners of Food Safety of all states and Union territories and all Central licensing authorities emphasising on discouraging the use of staple pins on food packets.

The practice has come under the scanner as many food business operators (FBOs) who are engaged in retail businesses are using staple pins to pack food items in plastic and paper bags instead of sealing them with a thermal unit or cello-adhesive tapes.

The letter pointed out that the metallic pins used in food packages are a physical hazard in food and pose a risk to consumer health and food safety due to which there is an urgent need to discourage the use of staple pins to pack food items in plastic and paper bags by creating awareness among businesses, especially unorganised FBOs and consumers on its harmful effects.

Speaking about the letter, Suresh Deshmukh, Joint Commissioner, FDA Pune, said, "This advisory is largely based on public interest and to implement the notice is our duty and action based on it will be taken as top priority."

He added, "Our main aim is to inform, educate, and create awareness for the food business operators initially and in spite of the guidance if anyone is found guilty strict action will be taken against them."

Offering further insight, Milind Deshpande, Assistant Commissioner (Food), FDA Nagpur, Maharashtra, said, "FSSAI is the supreme authority and it is mandatory for all the State Food Safety Commissioners to follow and implement whatever directives are given."

All the Commissioners of Food Safety of all states/UTs are requested to initiate a systematic campaign for generating awareness amongst all stakeholders to discourage the use of stapling and staple pins for packing processed and unprocessed food articles.