

Training to bring in hygienic practices in food industry

Those into food business in the district are undergoing certification programme on hygiene and manufacturing practices under FSSAI

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Good hygiene practices are soon going to be the order of the day in food industry. Those into food business in the district are undergoing training on good hygiene and manufacturing practices under the Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) programme.

According to the Food Safety Department (FSD), the programme is being provided in a phased manner and is implemented in association with the district units of Kerala Hotel and Restaurant Association, Bakers Association Kerala and others. While the training for hotels and restaurants is underway, those for the bakery owners will kick start on Thursday.

“The FoSTaC training programme is mandated by the Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI). The main aim is to raise the bar of food safety. Under this, the food business operators will be made aware of Food Safety and Standards Act, Rules and Regulation,” said an officer of the FSD. According to the officer, it is mandatory for the food business operators to participate in the training programme and clear the exam. “We were informed that attending the FoSTaC is essential for obtaining or renewing licence. Thus we informed our 2,200 members on attending the same. So far we have attended three classes,” said B Vijayakumar, district secretary, Kerala Hotel and Restaurant Association. Noushad, district general secretary of Bakers Association Kerala, said a total of 700 bakers will attend the FoSTaC programme on Thursday.

FSD officers said as the maximum intake capacity per class has been fixed at 40 to 45, it might take 15 to 16 classes to complete the FoSTaC training for bakery owners. Alex K Isaac, Assistant Food Safety Commissioner Thiruvananthapuram, said FSSAI recommends that all licenced food businesses must have at least one trained and certified food safety supervisor on every food business premises. Based on this criteria the training programme is progressing well in various parts of the state, he said.

According to him, while the training manuals are based on general hygiene or manufacturing practices as detailed under schedule 4 of FSS Regulation, the attendees will also be trained in the use of edible oil, fat, health supplement, and others. The programme also lays special focus on eliminating transfat from food items.