

IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS AND MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, 2018

1. New initiative:

Continuing its unstinted efforts to ensure safe and wholesome food for every citizen of the country, FSSAI under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare at the Centre and the Food Safety Commissioners in the State, is leading a massive mobilization drive through the largest ever Pan India Cycle Rally - the Swasth Bharat Yatra. Driven by passion and a clear vision, the mission of Swasth Bharat Yatra is to connect a country of 130 crore citizens physically and in thought, bringing alive Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a healthier India to commemorate his 150th birth anniversary. This yatra aims to build awareness around food safety, combating food adulteration and healthy diets to make this a household habit and culture.

On occasion of the World Food Day (16th October 2018), the Swasth Bharat Yatra was launched simultaneously at Leh (in Jammu & Kashmir), Panaji (in Goa), Thiruvananthapuram (in Kerala), Puducherry, Ranchi (in Jharkhand) and Agarthala (in Tripura). The kick-off event was a 'prabhat pheri' at all these locations with people from a wide cross section of society including children, NCC cadets, NSS volunteers etc. participating. After day-long activities in these cities, 150 volunteer-cyclists (at least 25 from each location) along with a convoy of vehicles for education, awareness and safety would be flagged from these remote locations.

After cycling for over 100 days and covering about 2000 locations, the Eat Right Convoys along with cyclists will reach New Delhi in the last week of January, where a massive outreach programme is planned in Delhi NCR region. Altogether, about 7500 cyclists are expected to participate and they together will cover a distance of over 18,000 km. They will cycle about 50 km or more moving from one city to another in a relay format. Thousands of other cyclists are likely to join for shorter distances and lakhs of people will directly participate in various activities including 'prabhat pheris' across the country. This would not only mobilize the masses but also create a large pool of local community champions to sustain the movement. Along with this, 'Eat Right' melas, 'Eat Right' conventions and a national poster competition are planned with a view to amplify and deepen engagement with various stakeholders, particularly with our young people.

2. Ongoing efforts in focus Areas:

- a) Notification issued regarding Recruitments and Appointments in FSSAI.
- b) As an endeavor to promote the latest approaches in microbiological sampling, testing and statistical interpretation, FSSAI, ICMSF (International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods) and CHIFSS (CII-HUL Initiative on Food Safety Sciences) jointly organized a two-day International Symposium on

“Microbiological Food Safety: Sampling and Testing in Food Safety Management” on 9th – 10th Oct’2018 to further strengthen capacity building of trained resources in India in the area of microbiological limits and criteria to microorganisms associated with food and food production.

The Symposium was attended by over 11 international experts from around the world and over 300 stakeholders including eminent scientists, government officials, and professionals from academia and Industry along with students from related fields. This symposium has set a tone for capacity building in the area of microbiological food safety management. Insights on microbiological sampling and testing coupled with ICMSF case studies and available tools for microbiological criteria setting will together help strengthen the national standards for microbiological food safety

- c) Under FoSTaC (Food Safety Training and Certification) initiative, 336 training programmes were conducted during October, 2018, in collaboration with various training partners.
- d) An interactive Radio Counseling Session was conducted in collaboration with IGNOU through Gyan Vani on subject “Artificial Sweeteners and Human Health – Aaj se thoda kam” on 20th October with a view to spread awareness about food safety among masses.
- e) Guidance note on “**Stickers on Fruits & Vegetables**” has been developed and shared by FSSAI through its website and social media handles. This note provides information about purpose of stickers; their health effects; advice for traders and consumers.
- f) IEC Activities through participation in exhibitions/events:
FSSAI participated in following exhibitions/events for public awareness, consumer education, publicity of FSSAI’s initiatives and to develop strong engagements with various stakeholders:
 - “IUFOST India 2018” 23rd-27th October, 2018 at CIDCO Exhibition Centre, Navi Mumbai
 - “drink technology India, 2018” from 24th -27th October, 2018 at Bombay International Exhibition Centre, Mumbai
 - “BIOFACH INDIA 2018” from 25th -27th October, 2018 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi
 - “AgroWorld, 2018” from 25th October to 27th October, 2018 at IARI PUSA Campus, New Delhi

3. Strengthening of testing infrastructure and support systems:

a) **Strengthening of State Food Laboratories:**

An amount of Rs. 50 lakh has been sanctioned to the State of Kerala for setting up of microbiological laboratory in the Regional Analytical Laboratory, Khozikode, Kerala.

b) Capacity Building:

Three day training programs on Good Food Laboratory Practices (GFLP) were conducted for food analysts & other scientific/technical personnel working in State and FSSAI notified Food Testing Laboratories as per details given below:

- Export Inspection Agency, Kochi during 9th – 11th October, 2018
- National Test House, Jaipur during 24th – 26th October, 2018

4. International initiative:

MoU on food safety has been signed between FSSAI and 4 Japanese agencies viz. the Food Safety Commission of Japan, the Consumer Affairs Agency of Japan, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan. The same was exchanged on 29th October, 2018 during the visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to Japan. The objective of the MoU is to strengthen mutual cooperation between the above agencies from India and Japan in the areas of food safety.