

Press Release

FSSAI Takes a Step Forward to Ensure Safe Food to Beneficiary

New Delhi, 26th Aug 2019: India is the second largest food producer in world but on Global Hunger Index 2014, India ranked 103rd out of the world's 119th hungriest countries. Due to some protocols, Food businesses also destroy food with smaller shelf life. Prevention of food waste and promotion of surplus food distribution is a global concern.

To address the same, FSSAI steered a second round of meeting with **20 Surplus Food Distribution Agencies** from various parts of the country to discuss the steps taken by government to ensure safe distribution of surplus food. The first meeting of a similar kind was organized on 30th July which was attended by 13 Surplus Food Distribution Agencies.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India had Gazette notified Food Safety and Standards (Recovery of Surplus Food) Regulations, 2018 on 4th August 2019 to establish a uniform national regulation to protect organizations and individuals when they donate food in good faith. This will further encourage big food businesses to come forward and donate food to these Surplus Food Distribution Agencies. These regulations will be enforced with effect from 1st July 2020.

FSSAI has also started an initiative called 'Save Food Share Food Share Joy' to create a food recovery ecosystem. This initiative aims to bridge the gap between food companies, surplus food distribution agencies and beneficiaries. One of the key features is creation of Indian Food Sharing Alliance (IFSA) - A network of food collection/recovery agencies in India, to create a pan India network of these agencies. This network will serve as a common platform for this cause wherein all of them will be equally benefitted with regulatory support, food safety training and capacity building efforts.

The meeting was targeted to apprise these agencies about their roles and responsibilities in ensuring safe food collection & distribution as well as prevention of food waste. They were also trained on hygiene practices during food collection and distribution under Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC). It will be mandatory for surplus food distribution agencies to register with FSSAI on food licensing portal. FSSAI provided on the spot registration to the agencies attending. At present, 20 such agencies have been registered on FSSAI licensing portal.

To become a part of IFSA network, these agencies can connect on share food portal of FSSAI. As a gesture to support safe food donation, CEO FSSAI Sh. Pawan Agarwal announced free FSSAI registration for these participating agencies. The forum also provided an opportunity to the surplus food distribution organizations to share their concerns and suggestions to help the network grow. Representatives from Elan Professional Appliances Pvt. Ltd. attended the meeting to present their ideas for ensuring solutions to ensure safe food handling during food recovery and distribution. They have also committed to extend CSR support to select agencies in developing their systems for safe food handling.

Integrated efforts from government, food businesses and surplus food distribution organizations are necessary to create an ecosystem for prevention of surplus food waste and the initiative is a beginning in this direction.

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