

Transforming India Food Safety & Nutrition System

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“FSSAI has already clarified that there is no conclusive evidence for any food-borne transmission for Corona virus. However, several instance have been brought to the notice of the Authority where some products such as frozen foods, food served cold/chilled etc were selectively not allowed to be transported, stored or sold, ostensibly on the notion that they could promote spread of Covid-19 **Mr G S G Ayyangar, CEO FSSAI P 13**

Editors Note:

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is taking a series of steps to facilitate un-interrupted supply of food by the food industry during the time of COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 training program for food businesses under the flagship of Food Safety Training & Certification program (FoSTaC) is gaining momentum and so far, over 18,000 people have been trained. Our awareness campaign on social media “Let's spread facts, not fear about #COVID19” has helped generate awareness among citizens while presenting real facts about the COVID-19 pandemic and debunking myths related to it....P3

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EDITOR NOTE

Dear Readers,

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is taking a series of steps to facilitate un-interrupted supply of food by the food industry during the time of COVID-19 pandemic. To deliberate on various issues faced by the food industry, FSSAI organized an interactive webinar session with top leaders of the food industry - packaged food companies, retail chains, QSRs and e-Commerce platforms.

This helped resolve many of the challenges that food industry is currently facing and find solutions and ways to ensure uninterrupted food supply while minimizing the risk of spread of COVID-19 among workers, staff, suppliers as well as customers in the food supply chain.

In addition, FSSAI is also engaging with other important stakeholders to create an enabling environment with support of professionals in food safety and nutrition for educating the public to maintain social distancing and good hygienic practices to minimize the risk of transmission of coronavirus during handling of food from close contact with infected food handlers or other individuals or through surface of food packaging material.

FSSAI recently organised an online interaction with various professionals including doctors, nutritionists, dieticians, food analysts, chefs, public health specialist and other members of NetProFaN (Network of Professionals in Food and Nutrition) to identify ways for citizen engagement and enablement. The Food Authority is also developing a guidance document, 'Eating Right during COVID-19' under the 'Eat Right India' initiative with support from NetProFaN members. This guidance document highlights some important practices and methods of maintaining hygiene and sanitation, recipes with limited ingredients but maximum nutrition and ways to build immunity specifically in vulnerable sections of the population.

The COVID-19 training program for food businesses under the flagship of Food Safety Training & Certification program (FoSTaC) is gaining momentum and so far, over 18,000 people have been trained. Our awareness campaign on social media "Let's spread facts, not fear about #COVID19" has helped generate awareness among citizens while presenting real facts about the COVID-19 pandemic and debunking myths related to it.

On behalf of FSSAI, I thank you, our patrons and supporters. Please do go through this issue to know more about our key activities and keep sharing your valuable suggestions.

Hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Warmly,

Inoshi Sharma, Director SBCD
Food Safety & Standards Authority of India
directorfssai@gmail.com

I. Core Regulatory Functions

I.1 Science & Standards:

I.1.1 Notice:

FSSAI issued a notice regarding Claims Approval on Format for providing claim support data. As per this notice, for any claim approval, the Food Business Operators are required to submit Claim Support Dossiers (CSD) including summaries of published scientific data comprising in-vitro, in-vivo and human studies data.

More details are available on: <https://www.fssai.gov.in/advisories.php>

1A. Summary of in-vitro data

Material tested (1)	Microbes / Cell lines / organ culture / other test system (2)	Concentrations tested, negative and positive controls used (3)	Variables, biomarkers, performance indicators evaluated measured(4) /	Results obtained (5)	Reference of publication(6)

1B. Summary of in-vivo data

Material tested (1)	Laboratory animal used / knockout animals if used / isolated organ if used / any other test system (2)	Concentrations tested, negative and positive controls used (3)	Variables, biomarkers, performance indicators evaluated measured(4) /	Results obtained (5)	Reference of publication (6)

1C. Summary of human study data

Nature of study (1)	Material tested and their levels (2)	Nature of volunteers /subjects/ population / patients (3)	Design of study and n =? (4)	Inclusion exclusion criteria (5)	Duration of study (6)	Variables measured (7)	Results obtained (8)	Reference of publication (9)

I.1.2 Frequently asked questions [FAQs]

FSSAI uploaded [Frequently asked questions \[FAQs\]](#) on following Regulations namely for better understanding and clarity of food business operators (FBOs) and consumers.

- Food Safety and Standards (Health Supplements, Nutraceuticals, Food for Special Dietary Use, Food for Special Medical Purpose, Functional Food and Novel Food) Regulations, 2016,
- Organic Foods,
- Advertising & Claims on Food Products,
- Food Safety and Standards (Approval of non-specified food and food ingredients) Regulations, 2017

The details are available in following links:

<https://www.fssai.gov.in/cms/standardsfaq.php>

1.2 Laboratory Services

1.2.1 Order:

Validity of FSSAI recognized Food testing Laboratories

FSSAI issued an order dated 12th May 2020 regarding the list of FSSAI recognized Food Testing Laboratories along with the validity of their NABL accreditation, scope of testing and contact details for the purpose of carrying out the analysis of food samples taken

The details can be accessed at:

https://fssai.gov.in/upload/advisories/2020/05/5ebaad402d7beLetter_Food_Test_Labs_V alidity_12_05_2020.pdf

1.3 Compliance & Enforcement

1.3.1 Orders:

Direction regarding display of “Date of Manufacturing” and “Best Before Date” for sweets

In view Covid-2019, FSSAI issued an order dated 21st May 2020 directing extension of date of display of “Date of Manufacturing” and Best Before Date” in case of non-packaged/loose sweets on the container/ tray at the outlets for sale from 01.6.2020 to 01.8.2020.

The copy of the order can be accessed at:

https://fssai.gov.in/upload/advisories/2020/05/5ec76f8ac4e75Order_Display_Manufactur e_Best_Before_Date_22_05_2020.pdf

1.3.2 Letters issued by FSSAI in view of COVID-19

Letter to Food Safety Commissioners of States/ UTs regarding steps to facilitate the Food Businesses in COVID-19

A letter was issued by FSSAI dated 04th May 2020 to update the States/ UTs about the important steps taken by FSSAI to facilitate the Food Businesses in COVID-19 era as well as the key priorities of the food authority to ensure safety to food.

The copy of the letter can be accessed at:

https://fssai.gov.in/upload/advisories/2020/05/5eb13e07d8b40Letter_Steps_Business_CO VID_05_05_2020.pdf

Letter to States/ UTs regarding clarification on relation of food with COVID-19 pandemic

A letter was issued by FSSAI dated 05th May 2020 to the Chief Secretaries of State and UTs regarding clarification on relation of food with spread of COVID-19 Pandemic. It clarified that several instances have been brought to the notice of the Authority where some products such as frozen food, food served cold/ chilled etc. were selectively not allowed to be transported, stored or sold, ostensibly on the notion that they could promote spread of COVID-19. It was requested that such restrictions imposed at State or local level may kindly be reviewed and those non consistent with FSSAI guidance may be reseeded.

The copy of the letter can be accessed at:

https://fssai.gov.in/upload/advisories/2020/05/5eb3ba21c046eLetter_Clarification_Food_COVID_05_05_2020.pdf

II. Transforming Food Environment

II.1 Third Party Audits & Hygiene Ratings

II.1.1 Clean and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Market:

To ensure Food Safety in Fruits and vegetable markets across the country FSSAI wants to raise the quality and safety of unorganized and organized fruits and vegetable retail markets and upgrade the condition of local unorganized/organized fruits and vegetable local vendors by integrating them with organized retailers including e-commerce platforms.

In this connection, FSSAI issued a Guidance note on Clean and Fresh Fruit and Vegetables that covers the implementation guidance for stakeholders to benchmark unorganized fruits and vegetable retail clusters/ mandis/markets so as to get recognition as **“Clean and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Market” with a controlled system of audit and inspection as per FSSAI guidelines and compliance checklists.**

The guidance document is accessible at <https://fssai.gov.in/cms/guidance-notes.php>



Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) aspires to raise the quality and safety of unorganized fruits and vegetables retail markets to the level of established and organized fruits and vegetables retail stores. This initiative will upgrade condition of local unorganized organic/non-organic fruits and vegetable retail markets across the country by integrating local vendors with organized retailers including ecommerce platforms. It will also build trust among consumers to have clean and safe fresh produce.

This guidance document covers the implementation guidance for stakeholders to benchmark unorganized organic or non-organic fruits and vegetable retail clusters/mandi's/markets so as to get recognised as Clean and Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Markets. These clean and fresh fruits & vegetables markets will promote availability of safe and hygienic fruits and vegetables. The market would be certified through a process of initial audit to identify gaps, improvement through hand holding and training of vendors, final audit for verification and certification thereafter its sustenance through routine inspections and testing.

This document contains guidelines for basic safety and hygiene requirements, standard operating procedure (SOP), audit checklist, details of auditing and training partners and list of identified potential markets across country which will help in implementation of this initiative. One of the important part of this initiative is training vendors/handlers involved in the sale of fresh fruits and vegetables on basic food safety and hygiene.

It is hoped that this innovative 'Clean and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Market' initiative will revolutionize unorganized retail sector of organic/non-organic fruits and vegetables in the country making it safe and 'most trusted' for consumers and buyers while also decreasing the incidences of health hazards due to unsafe fresh produce.

II.2 Training & Capacity Building

FSSAI issued a detailed guideline for food businesses during the COVID 19 pandemic. Further, to enable and equip food businesses to function and reduce the risk of contagion, FSSAI has launched a training program for food businesses under its flagship Food Safety Training & Certification program (FoSTaC). The training will be conducted online through the empaneled Training Partners.

The training program caters to all stakeholders in the food ecosystem comprising of manufacturers, packers, transporters, retailers, food delivery partners and aggregators as well OOH (Out of Home) space. The agencies/ NGOs serving food in places including langar, community kitchens etc. should also get their food handlers trained for COVID-19 precautionary measures. A certificate of participation shall be issued to the trainees through the FoSTaC portal. In addition to training for Covid-19 precautions, several other courses on food safety are available under the FoSTaC program of FSSAI. The guidance note can be accessed at:



Post COVID-19 training at a retailer

https://fssai.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Guidance_Note_COVID_15_04_2020.pdf

III. Mass Mobilization

III.1 Awareness campaign through social Media:

“Let’s spread facts, not fear about #COVID19”

FSSAI is constantly uploading Food Safety related posters and videos both in English and Hindi languages through social media platforms for generating awareness among citizens every month under the new awareness drive “Let’s spread facts, not fear about COVID19”.



Awareness videos with celebrities uploaded in month of May, 2020



Mr. Sangram Singh on Staying Fit during COVID-19



Mr. Guneet Singh Sodhi shares simple practices that can be followed while going out to homes to prevent the spread of COVID-19



Shri Krishna Beura on Things to Keep in Mind while Working from Home

Awareness posters uploaded

Myth Busters
on COVID-19

Does eating rasam or curry help prevent coronavirus?

No, there is no scientific evidence to prove that rasam or curry help prevent coronavirus. However, they help in promoting digestion and provide other health benefits.

To know more, visit www.fssai.gov.in



#EatRightIndia #SwasthaBharat #IndiaFightsCorona #COVID19 #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou

**COVID-19 :
भ्रामक तथ्य**

क्या रसम/करी खाने से कोरोनावायरस को रोका जा सकता है?

नहीं, ऐसा कोई वैज्ञानिक साक्ष्य नहीं है जो यह प्रमाणित करे कि रसम/करी खाने से कोरोनावायरस को रोका जा सकता है। हालाँकि ये भोजन पचाने में और दुसरे स्वास्थ्य संबंधी फायदों में मदद करते हैं।

अधिक जानकारों के लिए देखें www.fssai.gov.in



#EatRightIndia #SwasthaBharat #IndiaFightsCorona #COVID19 #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou

Myth Busters
on COVID-19

Does eating meat cause coronavirus?

There is no scientific evidence to prove that coronavirus can spread through meat. The meat should always be cooked thoroughly and safe food handling practices must be followed before its consumption.

To know more, visit www.fssai.gov.in



#EatRightIndia #SwasthaBharat #IndiaFightsCorona #COVID19 #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou

**COVID-19 :
भ्रामक तथ्य**

क्या मीट खाने से कोरोनावायरस होता है?

नहीं, ऐसा कोई वैज्ञानिक सबूत नहीं है जो यह प्रमाणित करे कि मीट खाने से कोरोनावायरस होता है। मीट खाने से पहले हमेशा उसे अच्छे से पकाना चाहिए और साध में साध सुरक्षा और उसके रख-रखाव के तरीकों का पालन करना चाहिए।

अधिक जानकारों के लिए देखें www.fssai.gov.in



#EatRightIndia #SwasthaBharat #IndiaFightsCorona #COVID19 #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou

वोकल फॉर लोकल

अपना संपूर्ण स्वास्थ्य बेहतर बनाने के लिए अपने आस पास उगाई गई चीजों को खाएँ और उसे अपनी जीवनशैली का हिस्सा बनाएँ।



#EatRightIndia #VocalForLocal #SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll

VOCAL FOR LOCAL

Make locally grown food a part of your lifestyle to improve overall health.



#EatRightIndia #VocalForLocal #SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll





Precautions For Coronavirus



Stay at home.



Wash your hands frequently with soap and clean, potable water.



In the absence of a tissue/handkerchief, cough or sneeze into your elbow.



Avoid touching your face.



Clean and disinfect surfaces regularly.



Practice social distancing.



Wear a mask.



Eat healthy.

Together we can fight C^oVID-19!

#SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou





Keep food safety in mind while storing food



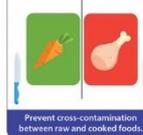
Keep food covered to protect it from pests and germs.



Refrigerate leftover food immediately.



Throw out spoiled food responsibly.



Prevent cross-contamination between raw and cooked foods.

Together we can fight C^oVID-19!

#SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou





GOOD HYGIENE IS IN YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Wipe your hands with a clean towel after washing them.



Together we can fight C^oVID-19!

#SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou





Food Safety Advice To Prevent The Spread of COVID-19



Wash raw fruits and vegetables with clean, potable water.



Cook meat well.



Stay hydrated.



Avoid sharing food utensils, water bottles or cups.



Clean surfaces such as tables with antibacterial bleach wipes.



Use different chopping boards & knives for raw meat & cooked foods.



Eat foods rich in Vitamin C to boost your immune system.

Together we can fight C^oVID-19!

#EatRightIndia #SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll





सुरक्षित भोजन के 5 मंत्र

गर्मी में स्वस्थ रहने के लिए ये आसान टिप्स अपनाएँ



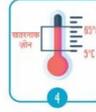
1. अपनी व्यक्तिगत स्वच्छता बनाए रखें।



2. कच्चे और पके हुए भोजन को अलग-अलग रखें।



3. भोजन को अच्छी तरह से पकाएं और शीकावा सुरक्षित करने का समय भी अच्छी तरह से नोट करें।



4. भोजन को सुरक्षित तापमान पर रखें।



5. कच्चे सब्जि पदार्थों को धोने के लिए स्वच्छ और योग्य पानी इस्तेमाल करें।

#EatRightIndia #SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll





क्या आप खाद्य संचालक (फूड हैंडलर) हैं?

भोजन को सुरक्षित बनाने में आप बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हैं और इन सरल मंत्रोंका पालन करें।



अपने हाथ बरतार धोते रहें।



यदि आप बीमार हैं तब भोजन न छुएं।



तेवर भोजन को खासी हाथों से न छुएं।



हमेशा कपड़े और पपन साफ ही पहनें।

हम साथ मिलकर C^oVID-19 से लड़ सकते हैं

#SwasthaBharat #HealthForAll #HelpUsToHelpYou

III.2 Meetings/ Workshops:

III.2.1 Interactive session of food businesses with FSSAI amid COVID-19

In an attempt to deliberate on various issues faced by the food industry and other stakeholders, FSSAI is regularly organizing online interactions with FBOs, States, Professionals in Food and Nutrition etc. Recently, the food authority organized an online interactive discussion with top leaders of the food industry followed by a high-level engagement with professionals in food safety and nutrition. The interaction with businesses was joined by CEOs, Managing Directors and Senior Leaders from packaged food companies, retail chains, QSRs and e-Commerce platforms. Representatives of various industry associations were also present during this high level interaction with the Chairperson FSSAI, Ms. Rita Teatota and Dr. G.S.G. Ayyangar, CEO, FSSAI.

Many of the challenges that food industry is facing currently are similar to that of frontline services such as police and medical staff. Therefore, this high-level deliberation aimed at addressing most of the concerns and challenges voiced by the food industry. Further, it would help find solutions to ensure uninterrupted food supply while minimizing the risk of COVID-19 for workers, customers and players in the food supply chain.

Smt. Rita Teatota, Hon'ble Chairperson, FSSAI thanked all the industry participants for sharing their views and opinions. While addressing the audience, she highlighted that *“During the current pandemic, nothing has been more core in governance as food supply and medical services. The eyes and ears of decision makers at all levels - are only attuned to the food industry and the seriousness and gravity of the crisis does not need to be emphasized. We have seen the focus areas shifting in the last few weeks and the constraints are also changing over time. Once permits were a major concern, then logistics, now newer challenges are emerging such as labour, issues on the ground, backward and forward linkages etc. The near future holds no certainty for us and this compounds the challenge further - both for food businesses as well as the administrators”*.

Several issues were highlighted by the industry leaders including SOPs and uniform protocols to be followed at the factories and other outlets post lockdown, guidance around reopening of restaurants and other manufacturing establishments, trainings and capacity building programs for the food handlers, suppliers and distributors. The key action points highlighted during the discussion include:

- Businesses to augment their role as socially responsible corporates, to complement the efforts of Government by starting with their workforce and their families, people engaged in their operations and then expand to areas which are difficult to reach or serve with the support of Government machinery.
- FSSAI to continue dispel any notions about food amid COVID-19. Timely update of the Myth Buster section on the FSSAI website to address myths/misinformation related to poultry products, cold and frozen foods
- Follow-up with States with a regular communication to the State authorities to have a fair and non-discriminatory approach towards any such concerns/ issues emerging at the ground level that hinders the supply of food

- FSSAI to issue updated guidelines on food safety hygiene and safety guidelines for food businesses during COVID-19, which shall cover the desired aspects related to uniform protocols and guidance for opening of various units including restaurants.
- Food businesses to organize COVID-19 training program for their food handlers as per the flagship Food Safety Training & Certification Program (FoSTaC). Further, they were suggested to come together and make it easier for their suppliers, distributors, retailers to undergo COVID-19 trainings.

III.2.2 Interactive session with professionals in food safety and nutrition

During a high-level engagement with professionals in food safety and nutrition including doctors, nutritionists, dieticians, food analysts, chefs, public health specialist and other members of NetProFaN, with the Chairperson FSSAI, Ms. Rita Teotia and Dr. G.S.G. Ayyangar, CEO, FSSAI, following action points were emerged out of the discussion:

- Utilize the technical expertise of the NetProFaN members, as a unique think tank, for preparedness of future pandemics such as COVID 19
- Seek technical inputs from all the associations on the guidance document - '*Eating Right during Covid-19*' for citizens, which would also include SOPs for community kitchens, pre-ordered food at home, traditional methods of maintaining hygiene and sanitation, recipes with limited ingredients but maximum nutrition and ways to build immunity specifically in vulnerable sections of the population.
- NetPRoFaN members to work on building trust in consumers with eating outside as and when the food joints re-open. Association heads to open new NetProFaN chapters in the regions where currently none exist for wider outreach and dissemination
- Support from NetPRoFaN members to translate and contextualize resources into regional languages.

Issues in Details

“CORONAVIRUS DOESN’T SPREAD THROUGH FOOD: FSSAI”

By Meenakshi Verma Ambwani | Tuesday, 05 May, 2020

CLARIFICATION AFTER STATES STOP SALE OF AERATED DRINKS, ICE-CREAMS

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has written to State governments that there is no evidence of Covid-19 spreading through food and they should not impose restrictions on sale of frozen and chilled food products.

The clarification comes after companies that make aerated beverages, ice-creams and juices complained to FSSAI that district level authorities in some States were not allowing transportation and sale of frozen and chilled products due to the misconception that it can spread Covid-19.

LETTER TO STATES

In a letter to the Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs, FSSAI CEO GSG Ayyangar said: “FSSAI has already clarified that there is no conclusive evidence for any food-borne transmission for Coronavirus. However, several instance have been brought to the notice of the Authority where some products such as frozen foods, food served cold/chilled etc were selectively not allowed to be transported, stored or sold, ostensibly on the notion that they could promote spread of Covid-19.”

“FSSAI has always advocated for science based approach. There is no evidence that Covid-19 is spread through food,” the letter added.

Companies and industry associations such as FICCI said last month that local officials in States such as Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Gujarat were not allowing the sale of aerated beverages, ice-creams and juices, among others. It had urged FSSAI to clarify to the State governments that these products are safe for consumption.

“It is requested that any such restrictions imposed at State or local level may kindly be reviewed and those not consistent with FSSAI guidance may be rescinded. It may be ensured that non-discriminatory approach is maintained by the States while dealing with food businesses in the lockdown and even post-lockdown period,” the FSSAI stated in the letter to State governments.

“FSSAI TRAINS FOOD BUSINESSES TO MITIGATE COVID-19 RISK”

By Rhythmia Kaul | Wednesday, 06 May, 2020

THE ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMME IS LAUNCHED UNDER FSSAI'S FLAGSHIP OPERATION, FOOD SAFETY TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME (FOSTAC), THROUGH ITS VARIOUS EMPANELLED TRAINING PARTNERS.

Food businesses can visit www.fostac.fssai.gov.in to enrol in the certification programme. (Representative image)(AFP)



Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has launched an online training programme to address the challenges in ensuring uninterrupted supply of food while containing the risk of contracting SARS-COV-2, which causes coronavirus disease (Covid-19), for workers, customers and all those involved in the chain.

“Covid-19 is posing a serious challenge for food supply chains worldwide ... Keeping these issues in mind, FSSAI had issued detailed guidelines for food businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic ... In a bid to enable and equip food businesses to function and reduce the risk of contagion, the FSSAI has launched a training programme for food businesses...,” the food regulator said in a statement.

The online training programme is launched under FSSAI's flagship operation, Food Safety Training and Certification Programme (FoSTaC), through its various empanelled training partners. Food businesses can visit www.fostac.fssai.gov.in to enrol in the certification programme.

“The training programme caters to all stakeholders in the food ecosystem comprising manufacturers, packers, transporters, retailers, and food delivery partners and aggregators. The agencies/non-governmental organisations (NGOs) serving food in places, including community kitchens, should also get their food handlers trained for Covid-19 precautionary measures. A certificate of participation shall be issued to the trainees through the FoSTaC portal,” the FSSAI said. The training programme seeks to emphasise on food hygiene and sanitation to prevent the spread of the viral outbreak.

“Practising social distancing by the staff is of utmost importance. It’s the responsibility of the employer to ensure the norms are properly followed. The module that FSSAI has created is pretty exhaustive and will help in putting in place infection control practices among food businesses,” said a senior official in the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, requesting anonymity. FSSAI guidelines, which were issued earlier, advocated for mandatory use of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits such as masks, gloves, and headgear.

It was suggested that a local emergency response team must be established in large food businesses to deal with suspected Covid-19 cases, and a person should be designated as the coordinator.

“Proper hygienic practices such as the washing of hands, frequent use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser, cleaning, disinfection, and avoid close contact with a sick person need to be followed. Besides, wearing personal jewellery and watch should be discouraged along with the use of mobile phones at workplaces,” the guidelines had suggested.

“FSSAI LAUNCHES ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FOOD BUSINESSES”

Thursday, 07 May, 2020

The training programme will cater to all stakeholders in the food ecosystem comprising of manufacturers, packers, transporters, retailers and food delivery partners and aggregators

In a bid to enable and equip food businesses to function and reduce the risk of Covid-19, FSSAI has launched a training programme for food businesses under its flagship Food Safety Training & Certification programme (FoSTaC).

The training will be conducted online through the empanelled training partners. Food businesses can visit www.fostac.fssai.gov.in or connect the FoSTaC training partners directly for this certification programme. The training programme will cater to all stakeholders in the food ecosystem comprising of manufacturers, packers, transporters, retailers and food delivery partners and aggregators.

The agencies/ NGOs serving food in places including langar, community kitchens etc. should also get their food handlers trained for COVID-19 precautionary measures.

A certificate of participation shall be issued to the trainees through the FoSTaC portal. In addition to training for Covid-19 precautions, FSSAI has also rolled out several other courses on food safety are available under the FoSTaC programme of FSSAI, details of which are available on: www.fosctac.fssai.gov.in.

THE HINDU

“HOSPITALITY PROFESSIONALS TO RECEIVE POST-LOCKDOWN TRAINING”

By Special Correspondent | Mumbai | Friday, 08 May, 2020

Online training to help hotels, restaurants ensure safety of guests and instil customer confidence

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), along with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), has initiated online training programmes for hotels and restaurants to ensure the safety of their guests and instil customer confidence in a post-lockdown scenario.

Given that COVID-19 awareness for hospitality professionals is vital, the module covers training on precautions to be taken and procedures that establishments should ensure, including receiving of raw materials, guest service, lobby management, and room maintenance after the lockdown is lifted.

FHRAI will conduct the trainings in collaboration with its training partner, Parikshan. The first batch of the Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) programme for its members was held on May 5.

FHRAI is looking to impart this training to 4,000-5,000 hospitality professionals in the next three to six months.

“The idea behind initiating this training programme is to have at least one senior staff thoroughly trained in safety, security and hygiene of an establishment. Once the lockdown is lifted, the trained staff will be in a position to impart knowledge to fellow staff in each section,” Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, vice president, FHRAI, said.

The objective of this programme is to ensure the health and safety of guests, keeping in view the awareness requirements about the pandemic and the necessary precautions that need to be taken by food business operators before restarting their operations, he said.

The trainings will be conducted online, and the training team is being led by V. Pasupathy, national advisor, FHRAI, and FoSTaC diamond trainer.

FHRAI said it had scheduled a series of sessions in a way to reach all its regional associations and through them, thousands of its members. “In addition to the webinars independently conducted on COVID-19 awareness by FHRAI, these certified awareness sessions are also important,” said Pradeep Shetty, joint secretary, FHRAI. The hospitality industry, which is known for its hygiene and cleanliness standards, will measure up to the emerging hygiene and sanitation demands of COVID-19 too, Mr. Shetty said.

The sessions will include video presentations, lectures, activities, chats and question-based discussions. The participants can register through FHRAI. On completion of the training, participants will be recommended for FSSAI certification through the training partner, after their credentials are verified.

“The feedback from the first batch was overwhelming. Many sessions have already been pre-booked and lined up in the next few days,” Mr. Kohli said.

FHRAI has organised multiple trainers in collaboration with Parikshan to conduct these trainings. “The hospitality industry is committed and is sincerely working towards safety of the guests and staff,” Mr. Kohli said.

“FHRAI INITIATES NATIONWIDE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS”

By Ashwini Maindola | Saturday, 09 May, 2020

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), in collaboration with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), has initiated a dedicated training programme on Covid-19 awareness for hospitality professionals across the country.

The programme aims to gear up hotel and restaurant players for a post lockdown scenario to ensure the safety of their guests and to instil customer confidence.

It covers training on precautions to be taken and procedures that establishments should ensure implementing including receiving of raw materials, guest service, lobby management, and rooms maintenance post the lockdown gets lifted.

FHRAI will conduct the trainings in collaboration with its training partner - Parikshan.

The first batch of the Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) programme for its members was held earlier this month.

The association is aiming at imparting this training to 4 to 5,000 hospitality professionals in the coming 3 to 6 months.

Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, VP, FHRAI, said, “The idea behind initiating this training programme is to have at least one senior staff thoroughly trained in safety, security and hygiene of an establishment. Once the lockdown is lifted, the trained staff will be in a position to impart knowledge to fellow staff in each section. The underlying objective of this programme ultimately is to ensure the health and safety of our guests. AtithiDevo Bhava and to us, our patron’s safety is paramount.

“The programme is being organised keeping in view the awareness requirements about the pandemic and necessary precautions that need to be taken by Food Business Operators (FBOs) before restarting their operations. FHRAI is organising these sessions to instill confidence in its members, guests, and the work force to prepare ourselves to tackle the post- pandemic situation,” he added.

The trainings will be conducted online using Zoom platform and the training team is being led by Dr V Pasupathy, national advisor, FHRAI, and FoSTaC diamond trainer.

Covid-19 has taken the entire world by surprise and has posed new challenges. Apart from the business challenges, the pandemic has also raised the need to redefine hospitality.

Government, with the help of experts has come out with guidelines broadly for the food industry and stays.

FSSAI, more specifically has issued guidelines on various food sectors including catering.

Pradeep Shetty, joint hon secretary, FHRAI, said, “The FHRAI being the apex body of the Indian hospitality Industry immediately took note of this. In partnership with Parikshan, FHRAI has scheduled a series of sessions in order to reach all its regional associations and through them, to thousands of its members. In addition to the webinars independently conducted on Covid-19 awareness by FHRAI, these certified awareness sessions are also important and we are very keen on promoting and learning from it.”

“The hospitality industry which is known for its hygiene and cleanliness standards, is sure to measure up to the emerging hygiene and sanitation demands of Covid-19 too,” he added.

The sessions will include video presentations, lecture, activities, chats and question-based discussions.

The participants can register themselves through the association to attend the sessions. After successful completion of the training, participants are recommended for certification issued by FSSAI through the training partner after verifying the individual’s credentials.

“The feedback post the first batch was overwhelming and many sessions have already been pre-booked and are lined up in the coming days. There are multiple trainers arranged by FHRAI in collaboration with Parikshan to conduct these trainings. The hospitality industry is committed and is sincerely working towards safety of the guests and staff,” added Kohli.

“STREET FOOD VENDORS TO BE TRAINED IN HYGIENE, SOCIAL DISTANCING”

By Risha Chitlangia | Tuesday, 12 May, 2020

The training of Delhi’s street food vendors will be based on guidelines prepared by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for food businesses during the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

The training of Delhi’s street food vendors is likely to start from next week and over 500 street food vendors will be trained in the first phase. (Photo by Tribhuwan Sharma/ Hindustan Times)

Eating street food will not be the same when the lockdown is lifted. To prepare Delhi’s street food vendors for the new normal, the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) has decided to train them in the measures they need to take while selling food.

The training will focus on keeping a separate table next to the cart from where customers can collect food, keeping a water dispenser, wearing protective gear, using disinfectants to keep the cart clean, opting for online payment, home deliveries in nearby areas among other things.

The training will be based on guidelines prepared by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for food businesses during the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

Sangeeta Singh, head of the street food programme at NASVI, said street vendors will have to get used to the “new normal to earn their livelihood”. While there were close to 1.45 lakh authorised street vendors as per government records based on surveys done in 2007 and 2011, their exact number now is not known as no survey has taken place in the recent past. According to NASVI, there are over three lakh vendors (approximately) in Delhi.

The training guidelines for vendors state that high-touch points (surfaces that are touched the most number of times) have to be cleaned twice daily using disinfectants such as sodium hypochlorite. “Vendors will now have to use these disinfectants to keep their carts clean. They will also have to wear proper protective gear, provide customers with water dispensers and make arrangement to regularly sanitise their hands. We will teach them about hand hygiene, social distancing, etc., which are essential today,” Singh said.

Shyam Sunder (65), a street food vendor at Harkesh Nagar in Okhla, is unsure whether he can immediately go back to selling fritters near the Metro station after May 17. “I will have to buy a lot of things, such as disinfectants, to keep the cart clean. But I don’t know if people would prefer to eat on the roadside. The government should help us restart our businesses,” Sunder said.

Subhash (who goes by his first name), another street food vendor near Pragati Maidan, is also uncertain about his livelihood. “We don’t know when the lockdown will be lifted and we will be allowed to put up our stalls. There is a lot of uncertainty. My brother had started selling vegetable during the lockdown to feed the family, but we discontinued it later due the rise in Covid cases in the Azadpur Mandi,” Subhash said.

The training is likely to start from next week and over 500 street food vendors will be trained in the first phase, Sangeeta Singh said.

She said vendors, especially those selling street food, will be the worst affected, as people will be reluctant to eat on the road fearing Covid-19. “Earlier, we would try to teach them about the importance of hygiene while cooking. But now the vendors are eager to know what they can do to revive their business. They have suffered a lot in the last one-and-a-half months,” she said.

Arbind Singh, executive director of NASVI, said that the Delhi government and municipal agencies should now create dedicated vending zones as mandated in the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, and also prepare a plan for street vendors once the lockdown is lifted.

“The creation of dedicated vending zones will help ensure social distancing. We will request the government to prepare a plan for street vendors, including food vendors. As and when the lockdown is lifted, street vending will need the government’s support in reviving their businesses,” he said.

A senior Delhi government official looking after the issues of street vendors in the Capital said, “There can’t be a common rule for all the areas in Delhi now due to Covid-19. The plans will be area-specific. We will ask the district magistrates to ensure that social distancing is maintained whenever vendors are allowed to operate. We will prepare a detailed plan once we get some guidelines from the Centre in this regard.”



“FSSAI NOTICE ON FORMAT FOR SUBMITTING DATA TO SUPPORT CLAIMS MADE BY FBOs”

By Ashwani Maindola | Wednesday, 13 May, 2020

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has issued a notice releasing a 'format' to submit the summary of published scientific data to support the claims made by FBOs.

The FSSAI has sought summary of published scientific data for human studies besides in-vitro and in-vivo studies in a prescribed format to support the claims made by the FBOs in relation with their products.

For human study data, the format includes questions like nature of study, material tested and their levels, nature of volunteers/subjects/population/patients, design of study, inclusion and exclusion criteria, duration of the study, variables measured, results and reference for the publication.

According to the FSSAI, in September 2019 a notice was issued for the procedure to apply for approval of claims specified under the FSS -Advertising & Claims - Regulations and a Claim Support Dossier -CSD was sought in support of the claims made by the FBO.

The September 4, 2019, notice of FSSAI had asked the FBOs to file application for approval of the claims with a fees of Rs 50,000 along with adequate published scientific literature/studies forming part of the claim support dossiers. However, there was no format prescribed then for submission of the documents.

According to an industry insider, the Advertisement & Claims matter is going on since many years. The basic data was / is provided by "Advertising Standards Council of India" and is still actively doing such work for FSSAI and the present

circular is in continuation of the descriptive part of Advertisement & Claims as a supporting data for such claims and so on.

Meanwhile, the format for providing summary of claims to support in-vitro data includes parameters like material tested, microbes/cell lines/organ culture/ other test system, concentration tested, negative and positive controls used, variables biomarkers, performance indicators, result obtained and reference for the publication.

For in-vivo data, parameters included were laboratory animal used/knockout animal if used/isolated organ if used/any other test, concentration tested & positive control used, variables, performance indicators evaluated measured, result obtained and reference for the publication.

Further, the FSSAI has released a FAQ answering questions related to the regulations governing advertisement and claims, which were notified in November 2018 and subsequently operationalised on June 28, 2019.

Press Releases



[Press Release dated 12th May 2020 related to FSSAI facilitates food businesses amid COVID 19 pandemic \[Updated on:12-05-2020\]](#)  [0.62 MB]

[Press Release dated 06th May 2020 related to FSSAI initiates training for Food Businesses to Mitigate Covid-19 \[Updated on:06-05-2020\]](#)  [0.61 MB]

Details available on:

<https://www.fssai.gov.in/press-note.php>

