



ADVERTORIAL & PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

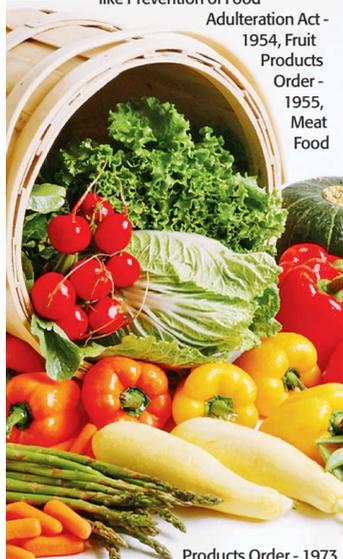
Monitoring Food

The food that we eat is a source of nourishment and nutrition. But it can also be source of diseases and illness. The difference between food as fuel for life and food as a source of ill health depends on the quality and purity of the food consumed. This is where the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) perform its vital function. It was established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which consolidated various acts and orders that hitherto handled food related matters and issues under the auspices of various ministries and departments. Some of the earlier orders and acts that were repealed by the FSS Act of 2006 included Various central Acts like Prevention of Food

The FSSAI is the regulatory body that deals with matters relating to food safety and hygiene in the country

authority based in Delhi that functions as a single reference point for all matters relating to food safety and standards throughout the country. The monitoring and implementation of the provision of the act/regulation is done throughout the country through designated Food Safety Commissioners in all the states/union territories.

As of the passing of the FSS Act - 2006, the FSSAI has been created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. From the multi-level, multi-departmental governance, the FSS Act - 2006 moved the control to a single line of command that can perform a multitude of functions seamlessly and effectively. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India is the Administrative Ministry for the FSSAI.



Adulteration Act - 1954, Fruit Products Order - 1955, Meat Food Products Order - 1973, Vegetable Oil Products (Control) Order - 1947, Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order - 1988, Solvent Extracted Oil, De-Oiled Meal and Edible Flour (Control) Order - 1967, Milk and Milk Products Order - 1992, etc.

The FSS Act - 2006, in establishing the FSSAI created an independent statutory, regulatory

FSSAI Functions

- >>> Framing of Regulations to lay down the Standards and guidelines in relation to articles of food and specifying appropriate system of enforcing various standards thus notified.
- >>> Laying down mechanisms and guidelines

for accreditation of certification bodies engaged in certification of food safety management system for food businesses.

- >>> Laying down procedure and guidelines for accreditation of laboratories and notification of the accredited laboratories.
- >>> To provide scientific advice and technical support to the Central Government and State Governments in the matters of framing the policy and rules in areas which have a direct or indirect bearing of food safety and nutrition.
- >>> Collect and collate data regarding food consumption, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, contaminants in food, residues of various contaminants in foods products, identification of emerging risks and introduction of rapid alert system.
- >>> Creating an information network across the country so that the public, consumers, Panchayats, etc., receive rapid, reliable and objective information about food safety and issues of concern.
- >>> Provide training programmes for persons who are involved or intend to get involved in food businesses.
- >>> Contribute to the development of international technical standards for food, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards.
- >>> Promote general awareness about food safety and food standards.

Licensing & Registration of Food Businesses

Since the Act came into effect on August 5, 2011 the FSSAI also oversees the licensing and registration of Food businesses. It defines a Food Business Operator (FBO) as a person engaged in the business of food manufacture, processing, packaging, transportation, distribution, storage and import, etc. and includes food services, catering services and sale of food or food ingredients. Under the Act the following must be observed:

- >>> All Food Business Operators (FBO) in the country have to be registered or licensed in accordance with the cut off limits laid down in the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Business) Regulations, 2011.
- >>> A milk producer whose production capacity of milk and milk products is less than 100

kg/Ltr. Per day, or is handling milk less than 500 litres per day or a meat and meat products producer whose capacity for slaughter is a maximum of 2 large animals or 10 small animals per day or 50 poultry birds per day or any other FBO whose annual turnover is less than rupees 12 lakhs is termed Petty Food Business Operator (PFBO) and is required to register.

- >>> Schedule 1 of the Regulations defines the businesses that will be licensed by FSSAI Regional offices. All other businesses will have to obtain licenses from the local District Designated Officer notified by the respective State government.
- >>> Applications can also be filed online at licensing@fssai.gov.in for central licensing. For further and more details log on to our website www.fssai.gov.in or call our helpline number 1800-11-2100.

For Existing License Holders:

- >>> Convert your existing food license/ registration into FSSAI license/ registration before 4th Feb'2013.
- >>> All FBO's should have a valid license at all time

General sanitary parameters

- >>> All food service premises shall be located in a sanitary place, clean, adequately lighted and ventilated and maintain overall hygiene.
- >>> Windows, doors and other openings shall be fitted with net or screen.
- >>> The water used in the manufacturing shall be potable.
- >>> Equipment and machinery that permit easy cleaning shall be chosen.
- >>> All equipments shall be kept clean, washed, dried and stacked at the end of business.
- >>> Premises to have efficient drainage system and adequate provisions for disposal of refuse.
- >>> The workers should use clean aprons, hand gloves, and head wears.
- >>> Persons suffering from infectious diseases shall not be permitted to work. Any cuts or wounds shall remain covered at all time and the person should not be allowed to come in direct contact with food.
- >>> All food handlers shall keep their finger nails trimmed, clean and wash their hands with soap, or detergent and water before commencing work and every time after using toilet. Scratching of body parts, hair shall be avoided during food handling processes.
- >>> Eating, chewing, smoking, spitting and nose blowing shall be prohibited especially while handling food.
- >>> All food stuffs to be covered to avoid contamination.

Q & A

Mr. S.N. Mohanty, CEO of FSSAI takes the time to answer questions regarding the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India



Mr. S.N. Mohanty, Chief Executive Officer, FSSAI

What are the functions & responsibilities of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India?
FSSAI is a statutory body created under the provisions of Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption in the country.

Tell us about the mandate & structure of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India?
Established under the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006, FSSAI is striving to become the single reference point for all matters relating to Food Safety & Standards, by moving from multi-level, multi-departmental control to a single line of command structure. It exercises power conferred on and to perform functions assigned to it, under the FSS Act. FSSAI consists of an authority, central advisory committee, scientific committee and scientific panels.

What are some of the challenges faced by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India?
As FSSAI is a recently set up body, it is presently focussing on building and strengthening the food safety monitoring and enforcement structure at the central as well as the state level. We have begun the work related to registration / licensing of the food business operators (FBO's). Simultaneously we are focussing on the strengthening of the food testing laboratory infrastructure in the country for monitoring and surveillance. The authority is also checking the safety of the food being imported into the country presently at select ports. Another challenge that FSSAI is grappling with is the effective enforcement.

Consumers are important stake holders and we will be focusing on making them aware about the provision of the act, its implementations and their role.

What is the future agenda/ long term plan of the Food Safety And Standards Authority of India?

- FSSAI will be focussing on:-
- 1) Strengthening of enforcement structure in each State.
 - 2) Creation of robust surveillance.
 - 3) Upgrading of food safety laboratory infrastructure.
 - 4) Thrust on capacity building to all the stake holders of food safety regulatory network
 - 5) Strengthening of structure by supplementing scientific / technical manpower.
 - 6) Focus on communication and awareness for consumers/ FBO's/ Other stake holders to help them make informed choices.

The last date for obtaining licenses and registrations for all food businesses across the country is February 4, 2013. What is the current status on streamlining the process?

I would like to urge all food business operators (FBOs) to approach their relevant authorities and designated officers and apply for food safety licenses well before the deadline. They should take licenses on an urgent basis and not rush at the last moment. FBOs of all the states should go to their designated officers and obtain the licenses as soon as possible, otherwise clogging will take place. **People in India are not aware about food safety, what steps have been taken by you to create awareness?**

Awareness generation is the most crucial component, which needs continuous and constant efforts targeted at various stakeholders, viz. consumers, FBOs, petty food manufacturers, hawkers, etc. A lot of promotional activities need to be organised to make people aware of the essential elements of the Act, mandatory parameters in starting a food business, clarifications with respect to online and manual licensing and registration systems. The Information, education and communication (IEC) materials that are being developed in the authority will be provided to each state, which can be translated into regional language. We are giving awareness campaigns priority on a consistent basis. We also ran an education programme on Kalyani TV on wholesome foods and hygiene earlier, and now we are running a programme on contaminated and adulterated supplements to educate the people.

HAND HYGIENE



Turning hand washing with soap before eating and after using the toilet into an ingrained habit could save more lives than any single vaccine or medical intervention, cutting deaths from diarrhea by almost half and deaths from acute respiratory infections by one-quarter.

THE ART OF WASHING HANDS

- Wash your hands with water and soap for at least 20 seconds
 - Make sure to wash between the fingers, under the finger nails and the wrists
 - Rinse well and then dry your hands
- WHEN TO WASH?**
- Wash your hands before, during and after preparing a meal
 - Wash hands before eating
 - Wash after using the restroom
 - Wash after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
 - Wash after handling raw meat, poultry and seafood
 - Wash after touching garbage, after touching pets or other animals



The habit of washing hands with soap before handling food, whether it is to eat or to cook, can eliminate many illnesses. Washing hands also prevents transfer of bacteria from hands to food. Hand washing with soap is also one of the most effective and inexpensive way to prevent diarrheal and acute respiratory infections, which take the lives of millions of children in developing countries every year. Yet, despite its lifesaving potential, hand washing with soap is seldom practiced and difficult to promote.

Consumer Rights & Rewards

As a consumer you have certain rights with regards to the food and food products you purchase. You also have a redressal mechanism to help you. All you have to do is to be aware and exercise your rights.

Know Your Rights

- 1 A Purchaser of food article may, if he so desires, can have the article analysed by the Food Analyst as per the provisions of the act.
- 2 The Purchaser shall pay the prescribed fee to the Food Analyst for carrying out the analysis which will be refunded if the food samples found substandard.
- 3 The Food Analyst shall send to the Purchaser his report on analysis of the article of food and if the finding of the report is to the

effect that the article of food is adulterated/misbranded/contaminated or does not conform to the standards prescribed under the Act or the Regulations. The Purchaser shall be entitled to get a refund of the fees paid by him.

Labelling

It is mandatory that every package of food intended for sale should carry a label that bears all the information required under FSS (Packaging and Labelling) Regulation, 2011. Food package must carry a label with the following information:

- Common name of the product.
- Name and address of the product's manufacturer.
- Date of Manufacture
- Ingredient list with Additives

- Nutrition Facts
- Best before/ Expires on
- Net contents in terms of weight, measure or count.
- Packing codes/Batch number
- Declaration regarding vegetarian or non-vegetarian
- Country of origin for imported food

Consumer Reward Scheme

■ FSSAI has a reward scheme for people who convey valid information about mislabelling, misbranding and extravagant claims. Your Identity will be kept absolute secret. A reward of Rs. 500/- will be given once FSSAI establishes the validity of the complaint. You can send the information to ceo@fssai.gov.in

Food Adulteration

Adulteration is a great menace to the public health and economic loss as well

Adulteration is the debasement of a substance by deliberately adding something not ordinarily a part of it. A food adulterant is any material which is added to food or any substance which adversely affects the nature, substance and quality of the food.

Food adulteration takes into account not only the intentional addition or substitution or abstraction of

food grains like wheat, rice, pulses and their products, edible oils and fats, spices like chilli, turmeric, cinnamon, pepper etc., milk and milk products, coffee and tea, sweetening agent, non-alcoholic beverages and miscellaneous items like confectionary, jams, sauces, ice creams and prepared foods items like sweets etc. Adulteration is a great menace to the public health and economic loss



substances which adversely affect the nature, substances and quality of foods, but also their incidental contamination during the period of growth, harvesting, storage, processing, transport and distribution. **Commonly adulterated foods**
Any commodity that is either expensive or sells more is the target for adulteration. Foods which are in a liquid, powder, minced or paste form are more likely to be adulterated, foods sold loose by the retailer is also more common as compared to the packaged foods.

Commonly adulterated foods are

as well. The FSS (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulation 2011, prohibits the sale of certain admixtures and the FSS (Food product standards and food additives) Regulation 2011 regulates the use of food additives, also specifies the amount which can be added to certain foods in prescribed limits.

For Quick Tests for common adulterants Visit our webpage (www.fssai.gov.in) for guidance to test some of the common adulterants in food at the household as well as at the industry level.