

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT

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OBJECTIVE OF FOOD SAFETY

- Objective of Food Safety Management is to ensure availability of safe food across the country. In a big country like India, where food habits are different in different zones in the country, it is an uphill task to implement uniform policy across the country.
- Economic status of the people divided the population into several groups and concept of safe food is not the same among these groups. Poor literacy rate also contribute to this.
- As per WHO report, it has been estimated that 70% population in India suffers from various diseases caused due to consumption of unsafe food. These food borne diseases can be controlled by stopping consumption of unsafe food.
- Now the real challenge before the Food Safety Authority of India is to implement the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 in a stringent way to ensure availability of safe food in the market.

ADVANTAGE OF FOOD SAFETY

- In the absence of food borne diseases, cost of medical bill will be reduced drastically and the saved money on this account can be better utilized for development of the country.

LEGAL PROVISIONS TO ENSURE FOOD SAFETY

- Clause 59 of the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006 seeks to provide punishment for unsafe food.

As per Clause 59 of the FSS Act, 2006, “Any person who, whether by his behalf, manufactures for sale or stores or sells or distributes or imports any article of food for human consumption which is unsafe, shall be punishable-

- Where such failure or contravention does not result in injury, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months and also with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees,

- Where such failure or contravention results in a non-grievous injury, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year and also with fine which may extend to three lakh rupees,
- Where such failure or contravention results in a grievous injury, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six years and also with fine which may extend to five lakh rupees,
- Where such failure or contravention results in death, with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than seven years but which may extend to imprisonment for life and also with fine which shall not be less than ten lakh rupees.

MEASURES TO ENSURE FOOD SAFETY

- In order to ensure safe food, maintenance of quality control in each stage of production of food items to ultimate consumer is required. So all kind of business starting from manufacturing / processing requires licence from the authority.

Kind of business falling under FSSAI-

- Manufacturing/ Processing including sorting, grading etc.,
- Milk Collection/ chilling
- Slaughter House
- Solvent extracting unit
- Solvent extracting plant equipped with pre cleaning of oil seeds or pre expelling of oil.
- Solvent extracting and oil refining plant
- Packaging
- Relabeling (manufactured by third party under own packing and labelling)
- Importing
- Storage/ Warehouse/ Cold Storage
- Retail Trade
- Wholesale Trade
- Distributors/ Supplier
- Transporter of food
- Catering
- Dhaba or any other food vending establishment
- Club/ Canteen
- Hotel
- Restaurant
- Other (s)

- Even petty food business operators whose annual turnover of less than 12 lakhs are required to take registrations from the authority.

HYGIENE AND SANITATION

- In schedule 4 of Food Safety & Standards Regulation, 2011, general hygienic and sanitary practices to be followed by food business operators have been elaborated. These are the basic- compulsory requirements for ensuing safety of the food manufactured in any premises. FBO's shall continuously try to improve the sanitary and hygienic conditions at the premises with a goal of attaining India HACCP standards.
- Not only sanitation and maintenance of establishment premises is important but personal hygiene of workers as well as personal cleanliness is also to be ensured by the FBO's.
- Persons working directly with and handling raw materials or dairy products shall maintain the highest standards of personal cleanliness at all times. In particular they shall-
 - wear suitable, clean working clothes and headgear which completely encloses their hair;
 - wash their hands at least each time work is resumed and whenever contamination of their hands has occurred;

- cover wounds to the skin with a suitable waterproof dressing. No person with injury on hand, even with dressing, shall be placed in any product making/handling section;
- avoid certain hand habits-e.g. scratching nose, running hand through hair etc. that are potentially hazardous when associated with handling dairy products and might lead to food contamination through the transfer of bacteria from the employee to the product during its preparation. When unavoidable, hands should be washed before resuming work after such actions.

FOOD TESTING FACILITIES

- A well-equipped, laboratory for testing of food materials/foods for physical, chemical and microbiological analysis in accordance with the specification/ standards laid down under the rules and regulations shall be in place for regular/ periodical testing and whenever required.

FSMS PLAN

- Every manufacturing unit should submit a Food Safety Management System Plan or certificate.

FOOD SAFETY SURVEILLANCE IN INDIA

Under Section 16 (3)

- FSSAI is required to search, collate, analyse and summarize relevant scientific and technical data particularly relating to identification of emerging risks, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, introduction of a rapid alert system etc.
- The Authority is also expected to track food safety trends and advise the Government suitably.
- Provide scientific and technical advice and assistance to the Central Government and the State Governments in implementation of crisis management procedures with regard to food safety.

FOOD INCIDENT

- Incident: any event wherever, based on the information available, there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety or quality of food that could require intervention to protect consumers interest.
- Emerging risk: any risk resulting from exposure to a newly identified hazard, or a new increased exposure and/ or susceptibility to a known hazard.
- Types of food incident can range from large- scale outbreaks of food poisoning to smaller incidents such as isolated cases of botulism in livestock. Incidents that are reported are classified in terms of complexity and severity (low, medium and high).

ROLE OF ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

- Identify the hazard giving rise to the incident .
- Asses the risk.
- Initiate action.
- Communicate as necessary to other authorities, agencies, organisations or consumers.
- Review activities on the basis of information available
- Act as a contact point for information available.



ROLE OF FOOD BUSINESS OPERATORS

- Take all necessary measures to protect public health.
- Maintain an effective recall and traceability system.
- Maintain process and traceability documentation.
- Notified the relevant official agencies and /or the FSSAI of incidents or potential incidents without delay.
- Initiate the withdrawal and/ or recall of products as necessary.
- Provide all necessary assistance and co- operation to an investigating agency.
- Ensure timely release of information relevant to an investigation.
- Review and update information as it becomes available and ensure investigating agencies are notified during incidents.
- Prevent the sale of food which does not comply with the provision of any regulation applicable to that particular food.

INCIDENT CLOSURE

- Complete investigation into the incident.
- Ensure all possible action has been carried out to ensure food products have been recalled or withdrawn.
- Notify all parties involved that the incident is closed when action was initiated by the food business operator, enforcement officers or the central authority.
- Make a summary record/ report of the outcome including details on the quantity of product recalled/ withdrawn/ returned/ destroyed.

CONCLUSIONS

India has various food products in each state and food innovation is taking place at a high rate. The consumer safety is of paramount importance and main objective of FSSAI is to ensure that all products which are placed in the market are having appropriate safety. This is achievable only if the FBO's take preventive measures in respect of hygiene, sanitation and stringent quality control of food products in every stage starting from collection of raw materials to the platter in the dining table. Any weakness in this chain will make the product unsafe.

THANK YOU

