

FSSAI Directs Food Commissioners to Prevent Use of Banned Substances for Artificial Ripening of Fruits

26 March, 2019 Abha Toppo



The FSSAI -Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has directed the food safety commissioners in all States as well as Union Territories to take on “effective surveillance and enforcement activities” to stop the use of prohibited substances like calcium carbide or acetylene gas for unnatural/artificial ripening of fruits.

The regulator told that artificial ripening of fruits with the use of prohibited substances poses serious risk to the health of customers. Keeping in mind the extensive use of banned calcium carbide & non-availability of substitute ripening agent, the FSSAI had allowed the use of ethylene gas for maturing of fruits in the year 2016.

In an order, the food safety regulator said, “Despite ban on sale of artificially ripened fruits with the use of calcium carbide, the prevalence of such ripened fruits in the marketplace is a serious reason for concern and should be tackled effectively”.

It further said, “Commissioners of Food Safety of all the States as well as Union Territories are hereby ordered to start effective inspection and enforcement activities to exclude any possibility of ripening of fruits with the aid of detrimental and banned substances acetylene gas or calcium carbide. They are also recommended to do similar exercise for vegetables to verify the level of pesticides”.

It has also urged the commissioners to conduct awareness programmes at market level targeted at vendors & food business operators. It also suggested use of electronic and print media to teach customers and food businesses regarding this issue.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has fixed a maximum permissible limit for ethylene use and specified a standard operating process.