World Food Safety Day 2021: Is our food safe for consumption?

World Food Safety day is celebrated on 7th June every year to raise awareness about food-borne risks like diseases and help in preventing, detecting and managing untoward diseases, in the essence of contributing to sustainable human development through proper food security measures.

The theme of World Food Safety Day 2021 is 'Safe food today for a healthy tomorrow.' The World Health Organisation intends to stress the fact that the production and consumption of safe food have immediate and long-term benefits for people, the planet and the economy.

In the year 2021, WHO is especially highlighting the risks associated with harmful eating practices, keeping in mind the backdrop of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which is believed to have begun spreading among humans two years ago from a 'wet market' in China's Wuhan.

History

It was decided by the United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2018, to mark June 7 as the day to 'celebrate the myriad benefits of safe food.' The World Health Organisation works to mainstream food safety in the public agenda and reduces the burden of food-borne diseases globally.

In the year 2020, the World Health Assembly further passed a resolution to strengthen global efforts for food safety to reduce the burden of food-borne diseases. WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) jointly facilitated the observance of World Food Safety Day.

Why is food safety important?

Food Safety can be defined as handling, preparing and storing food or drinks in a way that best reduces the risk of consumers of food becoming sick from the food-borne disease.

The food safety measures aim to prevent food from becoming contaminated and causing food poisoning. The range of these food safety measures is from 'farm to fork', meaning from the farms where the food is produced to all the way to our plates. Food safety and hygiene prevent germs from multiplying in foods and reaching dangerous levels.

Food Safety in India: How healthy is our food?
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is a statutory body established under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under the Government of India.

The FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India. FSSAI is responsible for protecting and promoting health of general public.

In 2009, the FSSAI had launched a pilot project 'Safe Food, Tasty Food to improve the safety and quality of food being served.

Food safety is a shared responsibility between governments, producers and consumers. Each and every individual has a role to play from farm to the table to ensure the food we consume is safe and healthy. Food safety is not just the duty of government or the FSSAI, it is everyone's business.