

Eight hotels in Salem get hygiene rating from FSSAI

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Hygiene rating certificate displayed in a hotel in Salem. E.Lakshmi Narayanan

To ensure better compliance with food safety guidelines

People who choose restaurants based on social media reviews can now be assured of safe and better dining by checking the hygiene rating of the hotel issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

On a scale of 1-5, food businesses are rated for the quality of food prepared and compliance with FSSAI regulations. According to Food Safety officials here, a food business operator with one star hygiene rating means the business needs urgent improvement and five star means excellent.

Officials from the Food Safety department said that seeking hygiene rating is a voluntary process and interested hotels should fill up an online self-assessment form on various requirements for the ratings. “Based on the self-assessment ratings, a third party audit agency and food safety officials will inspect the premises and conduct a gap analysis and check whether there are any areas to be improved. If the required elements are met, the food business is given hygiene ratings and if the score is 4 and above they can register to be a ‘Responsible place to eat’,” said R. Kathiravan, Designated Officer, Food Safety.

Dr.Kathiravan said that the aim of the programme was to ensure better compliance with FSSAI regulations. “The audit looks into every aspects of food handling including

personal hygiene of food handlers, kitchen hygiene, water source, dining area, source of water and others,” he said. Dr. Kathiravan added that eight hotels had received ratings in the district and they were encouraging more food businesses to take up the rating as it would only help them in improving the business.

The chefs are also provided with food safety training and certification to become food safety supervisors. Karthick R., Food and Beverage Manager of Sivaraj Holiday Inn, which has received hygiene rating said that it was a welcome move and would create awareness among public about healthy dining practices.

Dr. Kathiravan said that food businesses with hygiene ratings would be constantly monitored and the ratings would be reduced if they notice any non-compliance.