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Food safety officials inspect juice shops in city

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*B. Vijayalalithambigai, Designated Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (Coimbatore), inspecting a juice shop on Thursday. | Photo Credit: **HANDOUT E MAIL***

Underline hygiene and warn of action against use of ice made of impure water

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) officials inspected fruit juice shops in Tatabad and Ramnagar areas and issued guidelines for the vendors here on Thursday.

The guidelines included the use of ice made from purified water, with a purchase receipt, avoiding extraction of juice from fruits that are artificially ripened using calcium carbide and the use of plastic bags or containers. They also insisted on the obtaining of FSSAI registration for roadside juice stalls.

“The inspection was intended to create awareness among the juice vendors,” said B. Vijayalalithambigai, Designated Officer, FSSAI (Coimbatore), who carried out the inspection along with another official. She said the inspections did not find anything

incriminating. “Last year, we caught the vendors using [calcium] carbide for ripening fruits, but not so far this year,” she told *The Hindu* .

Stressing the importance of using ice made only from purified water, Ms. Vijayalalithambigai pointed out that there was a danger of ice used for other purposes, such as storing fish, being used at juice shops. “We [FSSAI officials] have visited a few ice [manufacturing] companies and instructed them not to use impure water to make ice,” she said.

The official said the juice vendors must display the FSSAI registration on their shops as per the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. The Act mandates Food Business Operators (FBOs) earning less than ₹12 lakh per year to obtain an FSSAI registration .

The officials also visited shops that sold *kambu koozh* (millet gruel) and issued similar guidelines regarding hygiene and FSSAI registration.

Pointing out that many people opted to consume the less-expensive gruel than fruit juice, Ms. Vijayalalithambigai said there was need to create awareness among the vendors on food safety.

People can send their complaints on lack of food safety through WhatsApp at 94440 42322, Ms. Vijayalalithambigai said, adding that the number is directly under the Food Safety Commissioner.

The complaints received will be forwarded to the respective districts for further action, she said.