

Mangoes ripened with chemicals seized

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MAY 27, 2019



Artificially ripened mangoes seized in Dindigul on Monday. | Photo Credit: G KARTHIKEYAN

2.5 tonnes of fruits destroyed at yard

DINDIGUL

Collector T.G. Vinay has said that surprise checks in private godowns in the district have resulted in seizure of mangoes allegedly ripened with chemicals here on Monday.

Following complaints from the public and doctors in government hospitals and PHCs that more cases turned up due to diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach pain. Medical examinations suggested the patients had consumed mangoes.

After chairing a meeting, the Collector instructed the Food Safety Officials to discreetly gather inputs by taking out a list of dealers and fruit vendors, who indulged in illegal methods.

The Designated Officer Natarajan and his team comprising Saranya, Chandrasekar, Kannan and others came to know that a few vendors indulged in ripening the fruits using chemicals.

In a surprise check in a godown belonging to Joseph, the officials seized 2.5 tonnes of mangoes valued about ₹1.50 lakh. Based on the confession, the officials informed the

reporters that the accused vendor had used “ethylene ripener” sachets to get the fruits ripened and fit for consumption, though it was not.

After confirming that the chemicals were used, the officials seized the mangoes and destroyed them in the compost yard at Dindigul Corporation.

A senior food safety officer said that they had raided two godowns near the bus stand and also checked at random close to 15 fruit vendors and wholesale dealers over the last three days.

According to the Designated Officer, public should be guarded against consuming mangoes as during this season the fruits were available.

Another officer said that the chemicals were used to ripen the fruit faster, which, when consumed, would cause stomach pain, irritation in respiratory system and sometimes lead to indigestion and may even lead to allergies.

The problem might be “severe” for children consuming such mangoes, he warned.