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Marico to expand Eat Right programme; Australian chef speaks to students about better eating choices



Shared responsibility: The Eat Right campaign has benefited 80,000 children in the past year. | Photo Credit: marilynna

Promotion of healthy food habits among people, especially children and the youth, seems to have emerged as a new focus area for corporates, educators, food experts, educational institutions, regulatory authorities and even startups.

Marico Limited, which has been partnering Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Food and Drugs Control Administration (FDA), Gujarat, to promote healthy food, has decided to expand the Eat Right programme to foster hygienic food habits.

Marico, with the support of local units of the FDA and FSSAI, is working with three Eat Right Campuses, five Clean Street Food Hubs and 50 schools in Gujarat wherein it has introduced the Safe and Nutritious Food at School (SNF@School) initiative. It aims to work with 100 schools, 10 Eat Right campuses and 11 Street Food Hubs and reach over 4,00,000 people across Gujarat, Chandigarh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu this year.

In the past one year alone, the company reached out to 200 schools, benefiting more than 80,000 children across India.

As a part of its Eat Right Campus programme, the company is into awareness building on healthy eating across campuses such as IIM Ahmedabad, NIRMA University in Gujarat, among others. To revive the street food culture across the country and provide

safe and hygienic local eating experiences for domestic and international tourists, FSSAI introduced the Project Clean Street Food initiative and Marico is supporting this.

“Food safety is a shared responsibility,” said Pawan Kumar Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI.

“Having made a positive impact in the past three years, we are now expanding our initiatives in Gujarat through Eat Right Campuses, Clean Street Food Hubs and Safe and Nutritious Food at School programmes, with an aim to promote healthy, safe and hygienic food habits,” said Dr. Sudhakar Mhaskar, CTO, Research and Development, Marico.

Meanwhile Australian cooking icon and MasterChef guest judge Stephanie Alexander A.O. is visiting India to talk to young students about the importance of healthy eating choices.

A graduate of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne, she is part of a delegation from the University of Melbourne.

As the founder of Stephanie’s Restaurant, which operated in Melbourne for 21 years, and the author of 18 cookbooks, she said she is passionate about education. Through her Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, a charity, she promotes healthy eating choices for children through fun and hands-on learning.

It is this passion for both food and education which brings her to India for events run by the University of Melbourne to speak with prospective graduate students in Marketing, Journalism, Media and Communications about the importance of food culture.

The events, titled ‘Food Journeys’, will also feature leading academics from the University of Melbourne’s Faculty of Arts.

“I am very pleased to have this opportunity and hope I will be able to encourage young Indians to take the plunge into a new culture, and enjoy the enrichment that follows such a venture,” Ms. Alexander said.

On the other hand, Bengaluru-based startup ‘Bhookha Haathi’, founded by Abhimanyu Rishi and Kusum Bhandari, is building an alternative foods and health-based nutraceutical tech brand that can help consumers live a healthy lifestyle by offering them products that can support their well being. The company offers healthier diets by supplying people nutritious, wholesome and tasty choices as an alternative to the nutrient-deficient ingredients in their daily diet. Its offerings are 100% natural compositions based on dried fruits, nuts, herbs, spices, seeds, grains and honey, among other whole and natural ingredients. These are targeted at health enthusiasts and those who are regulars at workouts, yoga and bicycling.