

# THE HINDU

---

## Implementation of rule on cooking oil a question mark in Karnataka

Afshan Yasmeen 02 March, 2019

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's (FSSAI) recent directive prohibiting Food Business Operators (FBOs), whose consumption of edible oils for frying is more than 50 litres a day, from reusing cooking oil more than three times may be easier issued than implemented in Karnataka.

Food safety officials, who admit there are several challenges to implementing the directive, which is to come into effect from Sunday, said a strong ecosystem has to be created before enforcement.

Though Karnataka is the first State to have a Bio Energy Development Board and re-used cooking oil is being collected from big chains of restaurants by biodiesel manufacturing units, the main issue is regarding the registration of such units and empanelment of aggregators collecting Repurpose Used Cooking Oil (RUCO). Without empanelment, many aggregators are finding it difficult to collect used cooking oil from hotel chains. Nearly 200 tonnes of RUCO is generated every month in the State, but there is no data on how much of it is being collected.

With the Bio Energy Development Board not authorised to register these aggregators, there is a need for a policy decision to empower the FSSAI to register these aggregators. These challenges were discussed at a meeting of top officials from the food authority in Bengaluru on Friday.

Health Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Pandey, who is the State Food Safety Commissioner, said a meeting of all stakeholders would be called shortly to discuss these challenges. “While we are committed to implementing the directive, we first need to create an ecosystem before enforcement. We also need to sensitise the stakeholders about the hazards of reusing cooking oil and the need to dispose it of scientifically,” he said.

FSSAI chief executive officer Pawan Kumar Agarwal told *The Hindu* that the directive is to ensure that reused cooking oil is neither directly used in food preparation nor allowed to re-enter the food chain. “We have done this to set safety standards in the food industry. But we know that these changes cannot happen overnight,” he said.

“All FBOs whose consumption of edible oil for frying is more than 50 litres daily will now have to maintain records, including date, name of oil, quantity of oil taken for frying, quantity discarded at the end of the day, date and mode of disposal of used cooking oil, and discarded oil collected by agency authorised by the FSSAI or Commissioner of Food Safety of States/UTS,” he said.

That apart, cooking oil having developed Total Polar Compound (TPC) of more than the prescribed 25% should not be topped up with fresh oil.

“This has been made one of the licensing conditions and State food safety officials will conduct random checks in their jurisdiction. During Friday’s meeting, the Karnataka government promised us of implementing the directive,” Mr. Agarwal added.