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Press Release

FSSAI issues a Guidance Document on Safe handling, Processing and Consumption of Poultry Meat and Eggs during Bird Flu Pandemic

New Delhi, January 21, 2021: In view of the Bird Flu Pandemic, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued a guidance document on “**Safe handling, processing and consumption of poultry meat and eggs during bird flu Pandemic**” for creating awareness amongst Food Business Operators (FBOs) and consumers. The guidance note is available at (<https://www.fssai.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Guidance Note Meat Egg Bird Flu 20 01 2021.pdf>)

This document aims to guide and create awareness among FBOs and consumers about safe handling and processing practices for poultry and eggs. It also provides guidance to the consumers for safe handling of poultry and eggs at the household level during such pandemic.

The document suggests that proper cooking inactivates the virus present inside the meat and eggs. Poultry meat and eggs from the areas affected with outbreaks in poultry should not be consumed raw or partially cooked. However, to date, no evidence indicates that anyone has become infected following the consumption of properly cooked poultry or poultry products, even if these foods were contaminated with the avian influenza virus.

The WHO also states that it is safe to consume poultry meat and eggs. According to the WHO official website, there is no epidemiological data which suggests that the disease can be transmitted to humans through cooked food.

Major Do's and Don'ts suggested are-

1. Do not eat half-boiled eggs
2. Do not eat undercooked chicken
3. Avoid direct contact with birds in the infected areas
4. Avoid touching dead birds with bare hands
5. Do not keep raw meat in open
6. No direct contact with raw meat
7. Use a mask and gloves at the time of handling raw chicken
8. Wash hands frequently
9. Maintain the cleanliness of surroundings.
10. Eat chicken, eggs and their products after cooking.

The virus is destroyed at 70°C if held for about 3 seconds. Also, properly cooking meat or eggs to achieve a temperature of 74°C in eggs or all parts of meat will inactivate the virus.

FSSAI urges the FBOs and consumers not to panic and ensure proper handling and cooking of poultry meat and eggs for its safe consumption as outlined in this guidance document.

For more information please visit FSSAI website (www.fssai.gov.in).

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