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“The ‘Eat Right India’ movement initiated by FSSAI has gone a long way in creating awareness amongst people about eating safe, healthy and sustainably. Today, we see clusters of street vendors across the country, campuses certified as Eat Right Campuses and food service establishments, rated under the Hygiene Rating scheme.”



# ROUNDUP



Safe and nutritious food is the key to a healthy future!



Empowering India  
Towards A Healthy Future

## - Atmanirbhar Bharat

Instilling confidence among the consumers that the food is safe to eat is a crucial part of the food safety ecosystem. The FSSAI's Eat Right India initiative is a huge step in this direction.

DATA BRIEFING

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Clean Street Food Hubs have been certified in different parts of the country



**THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC** has brought the world to a halt, forcing governments all over the world to strengthen their public health systems. However, the far deadlier 'silent epidemic' of malnutrition remains overlooked.

According to the 'Chronic Hungry: FAO State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, 2018' report, 196 million Indians are undernourished. And yet, another 135 million are overweight/obese (Prevalence of Obesity in India: A Systematic Review Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome, Clinical Research & Reviews, Ahirwar & Mondal, 2019). This puts the latter category at risk for non-communicable diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes.

Furthermore, the number of cases of food-borne illnesses is expected to rise from 100 million in 2011 to 150–177 million by 2030 (The Economics Of Food Safety In India – A Rapid Assessment by Wageningen Economic Research and ILRI, 2017). This will directly impact the human body's ability to absorb nutrients and fight infection, rendering millions vulnerable to a host of diseases.

The role of the FSSAI is critical in the light of this nutrition reality in India. Established under the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSS), 2006, the FSSAI is the apex food regulatory body in the country with the mandate to ensure safe and wholesome food for all citizens. As a part of its core regulatory functions, the FSSAI sets science-based, globally benchmarked standards for food safety, ensures credible food testing for quality and compliance to these standards and processes through effective surveillance mechanisms.

### The Eat Right India Program

The FSSAI has embarked on a series of initiatives to ensure safe, healthy and environmentally sustainable food for everyone through the 'Eat Right India' movement. This movement is a large-scale effort to transform the country's food landscape and incorporates all the key players in the food ecosystem. With the tagline, '**Sahi Bhojan. Behtar Jeevan**', Eat Right India is aligned with the government's focus on preventive and promotive public healthcare as well as other flagship programmes like Ayushman Bharat Yojana, POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukh Bharat and Swachh Bharat Mission.

In the wake of the current pandemic, the provision of safe and healthy food has gained greater prominence. Under Eat Right India, the regulator has launched different programs targeting both food businesses and consumers to create an environment of right food practices and habits.

Let us take a look at some of the novel and varied initiatives, FSSAI has taken recently.

- As per the FSS Act, 2006, food businesses are mandated to be licenced/registered with FSSAI. For this, the revised FSS (Licensing & Registration) Regulations simplify the process of both application and renewal, thus entailing reduced time and effort. The FSSAI is also in the process of releasing new

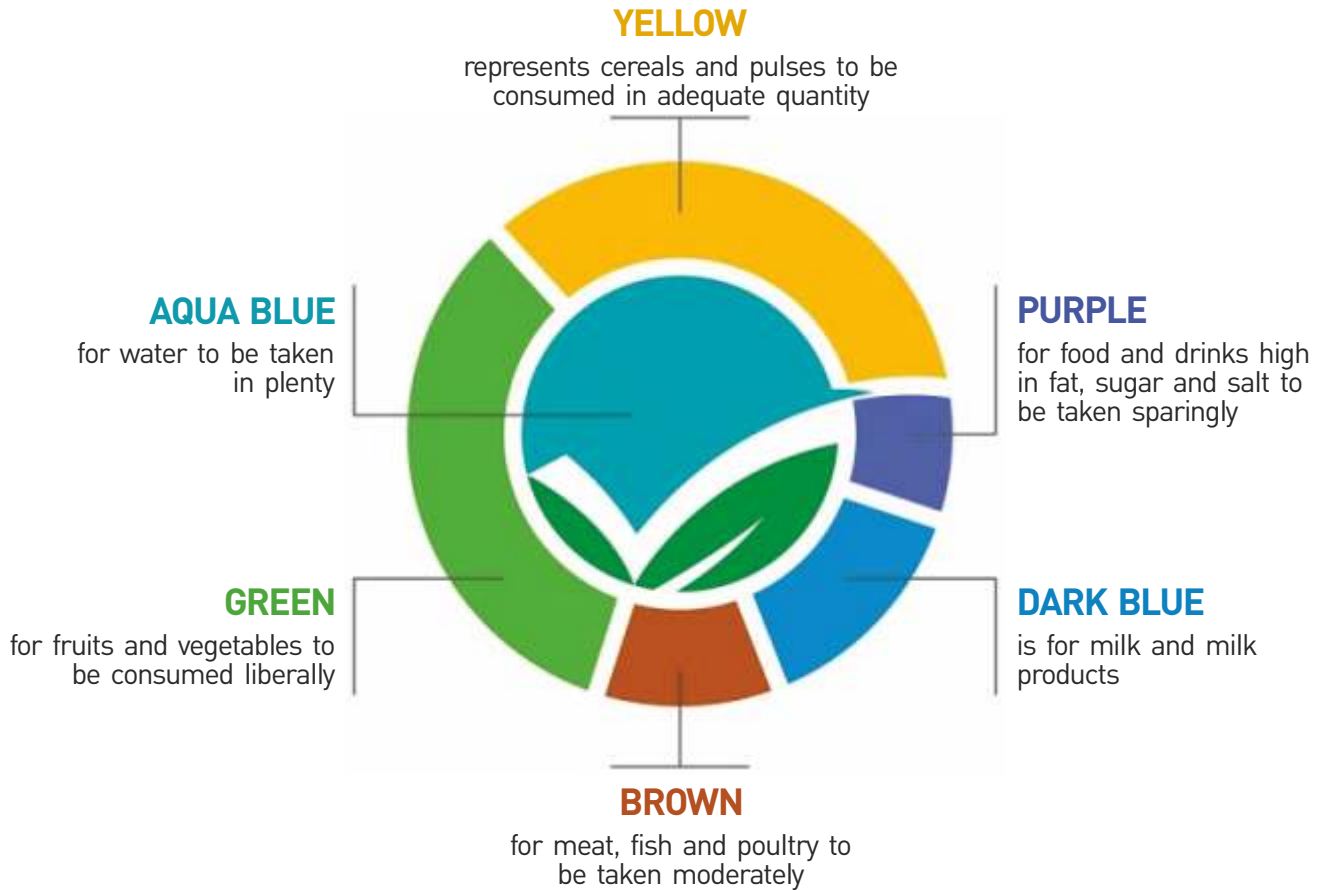
regulations to facilitate and speed up import clearances. These recent developments by the FSSAI support ease of doing business.

- To strengthen food testing, FSSAI has approved 53 rapid food testing kits/devices to ensure faster, better and cheaper real-time testing of food even at the field level, thus assuring safe and good quality of food while raising the bar for food safety in the country.
- The regulator is also concentrating on periodic risk-based inspections, third-party audits and focused checks to ensure that safe and quality food products are available in the market and earn the trust of the consumers.
- To build capacity of food businesses on food safety, the FSSAI has launched 'Food Safety Training and Certification' (FoSTaC) – a unique program to ensure that there is a trained and certified Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) on each food business premises. Almost 4.5 lakh FSS have been trained so far. What's more, the FSSAI tried to meet the novel demands of the unprecedented pandemic by quickly introducing an online training programme on hygiene practices required during COVID-19, which has already trained over 2 lakhs FSS.
- Given the large unorganized food sector in India - comprising a range of small food businesses like street food vendors, dhabas, eateries etc. - several benchmarking and certification schemes to improve their food safety and hygiene standards are in place. These involve training of food handlers and third-party audits of food businesses. Schemes such as 'Clean Street Food Hub', 'Clean and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Markets', 'Eat Right Station' and 'Blissful Hygienic Offering to God' (BHOG) for places of worship are targeted to clusters of vendors. So far, 20 such clusters – of Street Food Hubs have been certified, thereby raising the confidence of consumers in consuming food from local street food hubs.
- For individual outlets such as restaurants, catering establishments, sweet and meat shops the 'Hygiene Rating Scheme' has been introduced. Over a thousand food outlets have been rated so far to empower consumers to make informed food choices.
- The FSSAI has launched mass awareness campaigns to reduce salt, fat and sugar in the diet, - like 'Aaj Se Thoda Kam' and 'Trans-Fat Free India by 2022' - to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases.
- Going forward, the consumers will be further empowered to make healthy choices under the new voluntary regulations on 'Menu Labelling' that require bigger food service establishments to declare the nutrition information of each food item per serving.

### Scaling Up Food Fortification

- Large-scale food fortification is also being promoted to address deficiencies of vitamins and minerals like iron, Vitamin B 12 and folic acid that lead to conditions like

# The 'Eat Right India' logo – What does it actually depict?



iron-deficiency anemia. So far, fortified foods such as edible oil, milk, wheat flour, rice and salt - with the +F logo to identify them - are being supplied in the open market and in some Government Safety Net Programmes like ICDS, MDM and PDS in 19 states and 5 union territories.

- Another important regulation to boost fortification of food will now cover standards for fortification of species-identified milk like cow, buffalo, camel, goat, sheep etc; for all kinds of multigrain atta and categories of processed foods covering cereal products, bakery wares and juices – with various specified micronutrients, except in products that are high in fat, salt and sugar.

## Targeting Schools – Catching Them Young

- To target consumers in different environments - schools, education institutes, workplaces, hospitals etc., the 'Eat Right School' and 'Eat Right Campus' schemes have been launched. Under these initiatives, certification is awarded based on compliance to predefined benchmarks on provision of safe, healthy and sustainable diets in these environments.
- The food authority has recently finalised the FSS (Safe Food and Healthy Diets for School Children) Regulations, 2019 that will ensure wholesome food to school children by not allowing food items high in fat, salt and sugar to be sold and advertised within school premises or even within a 50 metre radius of the school gates.



**Eat Right, Stay Fit,  
Tabhi India Superfit...**

## Some of the Commendable Achievements

- Over **40** Campuses have been awarded 'Eat Right Campus' certificates across the country including IIT Gandhinagar, IIT Roorkee, LBSNAA, Mussoorie and other large private corporates.
- **20** Clean Street Food Hubs have been recognized and certified in different parts of the country.
- **4** railways stations have been awarded the 'Eat Right Station' tag including Mumbai Central and Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus at Mumbai and Anand Vihar Railway Station at New Delhi.
- **157** different fortified products are available in the open market.
- **47%** of the top ten players in edible oil and **36.6%** of the organized milk industry are fortifying their food products as per the FSSAI standards.
- **82** food distribution agencies have donated over 50 million meals to those in need in over 100 districts.

In addition to the Eat Right India movement, many more concrete measures to ensure that the food in the country is safe and nutritious are ongoing with many improvements on the anvil.

The FSSAI amended the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations in 2018 to further cap the amount of trans fatty acids (TFA) in oils and fats from the current permissible limit of 5%. Manufacturers are required to bring down the trans fat content to 3% by 2021 and 2% by 2022 in line with the WHO's call for global elimination of trans fats by 2023. The regulation applies to edible refined oils, vanaspati (partially hydrogenated oils), margarine, bakery shortenings and other mediums of cooking such as vegetable fat spreads and mixed fat spreads.

It also issued an order in February, 2020 requiring all traditional sweet makers to display the 'Best Before' and the Manufacturing Date of non-packaged sweets.

Work is ongoing on bringing animal feed under the purview of the FSS Act, 2006 and framing feed regulations accordingly. In the interim, the FSSAI issued a direction in 2019 that animal feed for food producing animals cannot be manufactured, imported, distributed and sold without the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) mark.

In sum, a lot is being done – but we still have a long way to go – to increase consumer confidence in the food while keeping it safe and sustainable.

- The 'Eat Right Toolkit' has been developed to reach citizens at the grass roots level through frontline health workers to promote right eating habits. This is being mainstreamed through Health and Wellness Centres under Ayushman Bharat Yojana.
- The FSSAI also releases 'Myth Busters' and 'Guidance Notes' for consumers from time to time to address any growing concerns related to food and clarify misconceptions at large.

With time, this 360° approach is expected to usher in a culture of eating right across the country.

In addition to the above, the Eat Right India movement is also spearheading different initiatives to encourage and support sustainable food practices to protect the environment. Such as:

- 'Jaivik Bharat' for easy identification of authentic organic food
- 'Save Food, Share Food' to reduce food waste and promote food donation
- 'Safe and Sustainable Packaging in Food and Beverage Sector' to reduce the use of plastics
- 'Repurpose Used Cooking Oil' (RUCO) for safe and healthy use of cooking oil and repurposing used cooking oil to make biodiesel/soap etc.

It's not just about promoting safe, healthy and sustainable food practices only. These Eat Right India initiatives are also generating economic opportunities in the food ecosystem through increased demand for trained food testing and regulatory personnel, training, auditing, implementation and development partners, petty food vendors and small businesses and creating a thriving circular economy in line with Prime Minister Modi's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

Eat Right India is ultimately a people's movement. Therefore, it puts the onus on everyone to transform the way India eats and usher in a culture of right eating. ▶