



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2018; 4(3): 131-133
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 19-01-2018
Accepted: 20-02-2018

S Jayanthi Sobhana
PhD Research Scholar (P.T),
PG & Research Department of
Commerce, Hindusthan College
of Arts and Science,
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu,
India

Dr. P Sekar
Associate Professor, PG &
Research Department of
Commerce, Hindusthan College
of Arts and Science,
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu,
India

Customer awareness on food & safety regulations in India: Current scenario

S Jayanthi Sobhana and Dr. P Sekar

Abstract

Food safety is about handling, storing and preparing food to prevent infection and keeps the food with enough nutrients for a healthy diet. Unsafe food are been exposed to dirt and germs, which can cause infections or diseases .food safety include the origins of food including the practices relating to food labeling, hygiene of the food, food colors and pesticides that are been verified by the governmental import and export inspection and certification systems for foods. In considering the consumer practices, food ought to be safe in the market and the concerning in safe delivery and preparation of the food for the consumer. The present study mainly deals with the law relating to food products. The consumer should be aware of the various food products. The consumer should check the details of various items that are been listed on the table.

Keywords Food & safety, food labeling, unsafe food, consumer practices

Introduction

There are various laws that have been established in India for the food standards, such as General food law, Agmark, BIS, FSSAI. These Acts are established for the assurance of safety measures to the consumers. The food label is one of the important and direct means of communication about the product information between buyers and sellers. Food labeling provides consumer with information on the characteristics of labeled foods. The information about nutrition labeling and health benefits of the food is one of the important factors that influence decision making. The modern package label has taken the steps for educating the consumer about the product by multitasking such as, attracting, promoting and motivating at the point of purchase through the information given in the label.

Statement of the problem

The most important statement is to identify whether the consumers are actually aware about the laws relating to food and safety. There are various acts that are been established in India for the food and safety. The present study aims here to find out whether consumer is aware of the food and safety regulations including FSSAI and the exact sort of matters related to the particular item that are being printed in the food labels.

Food labeling

Food labeling is any written, printed or graphic matter that is present on the label, accompanies the food, or is displayed near the food, including that for the purpose of promoting its sale or disposal. The following information should appear on the label of prepackaged foods asit is applicable to the food products which are labelled and could be different from one country to another in their existing legislation;

- The name of the food
- List of ingredients
- Net contents and drained weight
- Name and address
- Country of origin
- Lot identification
- Date marking and storage instructions
- Instructions for use

Correspondence
S Jayanthi Sobhana
PhD Research Scholar (P.T),
PG & Research Department of
Commerce, Hindusthan College
of Arts and Science,
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu,
India

Food labeling is essential for the protection of consumer. Label declaration on Packed food is very important for knowing the ingredients and nutritional value, and Helps in checking the freshness of the food and “best-before” dates.

Literature Review

This Study is about the food safety concerns and knowledge among students in university of Saudi Arabia - Mar 2017. The study is all about the food habits of university students both female and male of King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. Major food concerns for students were food taste, food temperature, food presentation, wellness of cooked food, cleanliness of serving area and appearance of food handlers. Students displayed good knowledge concerning food safety.

Food safety knowledge, attitudes and practices of Institutional food - handlers in Ghana. The Purpose of this study (2017) was to evaluate the food safety knowledge, attitudes, & practices among institutional food- handlers in Ghana. In general, institutional food- handlers in Ghana had satisfactory knowledge in the areas of food safety, general and personal hygiene, cleaning and sanitation procedures. However, this did not translate into strict food hygiene practices. Hence continuous food safety education & motivation for the food-handlers of various demographic backgrounds is to be paid to lower levels of education would complement other interventions that pursue the enhancement of food safety systems in Ghana.

Objectives of the study

The foremost intent of the study is to scrutinize the impact of this regulations Customers & to check out the broad aspect of how it’s being getting affected towards awareness. Specific objectives incorporate:

- To study the consumer awareness about the government regulations relating to food and safety, &
- To study the buying behavior towards the food products.

Food & Safety in India

The Food Safety and Standards of India (FSSAI) have been established under Food Safety and Standards, 2006. It has created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption

Important Food Safety & Standard Act, 2006

Various Acts like Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954,

- Fruit Products Order, 1955,
- Meat Food Products Order, 1973,
- Vegetable Oil Products (Control) Order, 1947,
- Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Act,
- De- Oiled Meal and Edible Flour (Control) Order, 1967,
- Milk & Milk Products Order, 1992 etc. will be repealed after commencement of FSS Act, 2006.

The Act is mainly for single reference point for all matters relating to food safety and standards, by moving from one level to multi- departmental control to a single line of command.

This Act establishes on an independent statutory Authority - for the regulation of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India with head office at Delhi. The FSSAI and the state authority for food shall also enforce various provisions relating to this act

Establishment of the authority

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, & the Government of India is the Administrative Ministry for the implementation of FSSAI. The Chairperson and the Chief Executive Officer of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is been appointed by Government of India. The Chairperson is in the rank of Secretary to Government of India.



Fig 1

Food Regulation – Current Scenario

In India the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is the apex food regulator. It is empowered by and functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. The FSSAI implements and enforces food regulations as prescribed in the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act). The FSS Act is an Act of Parliament, popularly known as the Food Act. Previous to the FSS Act there were a number of food legislations. All these have been consolidated into a homogenous whole in the FSS Act. The regulations of the FSS Act became effective in 2011 with FSSAI as its regulatory body. Though the Act continues to evolve it needs to be further harmonized with standards of international agencies for global parity.

Categorized as Standardized & Non - Standardized

In the FSSAI regulations, food products fall into two categories—standardized and non-standardized. The standardized food products are those for which standards are prescribed and do not require product approval prior to manufacture, sale, distribution, or import. The first time manufacturer or importer of standardized foods only requires an FSSAI license to begin a food business.

Non-standardized food products do not have standards as their safety parameters are either not known or not yet ascertained. Presently FSSAI has standardized only 380 articles of food in 16 categories so all other foods require product approval if they are not listed among these 380 food items. FSSAI is working to standardize another 12,000 more foods for which the process is nearing finalization in harmonization with Codex Alimentarius.

New Draft Regulations

New Draft Regulations have been formulated by FSSAI. Of special interest is Section 22 of the FSS Act, which deals with “Nutraceuticals, Functional Foods, Novel Foods and Health Supplements.” For the first time regulations have been proposed for this category of foods. If these products propound nutritional or medicinal benefits they need to have sound scientific evidence. The products must not contain either steroids or psychotropic drugs. Ingredients like vitamins and minerals must conform to the recommended dietary allowances for Indians, as proposed by the Indian Council of Medical Research.

The existing process of product approval for the food articles governed under Section 22 of the FSS Act has been discontinued as updated on August 26, 2015 by FSSAI in response to the ruling by Honourable Supreme Court of India. The regulations on such food products are expected soon and the product approval may be reintroduced through a regulation.

Recommendations & Suggestions

Consumer awareness should be created both in urban and rural areas by highlighting the rights of consumers by educating about the complaint, forum and redressal system. The study suggests following measures to spread consumer rights awareness for the protection of consumer interest:

- Consumer Right Awareness – element of consumer protection
- Consumer Education – knowledge of availability of legal remedy
- Role of Government – promote welfare of consumer

- Enforcement Agencies – mixed pattern of success & behavior
- Enactment and Amended existing laws – violation of consumer rights arising out of unsafe food items.

Conclusion

The present study reveals that there is actually less awareness among consumers on the laws relating to food & safety, while it reveals that they are much aware about the materials which are being printed in the label of the food items. The consumer mainly checks the maximum retail price, quantity and expiry date etc.

The establishment of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Special Courts and Special Public Prosecutors, and Food Safety Appellate Tribunal for speedy justice will make maintenance of safety standards more efficient. This Act prescribes special responsibilities for manufacturers, distributors and sellers on food safety. Different types of offences and stringent punishments are prescribed to reduce the offences under this Act and also it helps to avoid exploitation of consumers. There is a provision for providing compensation to the victims and the quantum of compensation depends on the nature of injury or death of consumer. And even the Court may publish the offenders’ name, address, offences and penalties in the news paper. Hence with all these provisions in the new Act there is hope for reduction in commission of food related offences and consumer will be protected more effectively.

From this study more awareness such be focused on the date of production, net quantity, various indigents used in the product must be known to the consumers. Moreover, the manufactures should create awareness to the consumers about the food products.

References

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_Safety_and_Standards_Authority_of_India
2. Kim S, Nayga Rodolfo, Capps O. Food label use, self-selectivity, and diet quality. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*. 2001; 35:346-363.
3. Wang G, Fletcher SM, Carley DH. Consumer utilization of food labeling as a source of nutrition information. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*. 2008; 2:368-380.