

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 926  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2020**

**MONITORING OF PROCESSING UNITS**

**926. DR. ALOK KUMAR SUMAN:**

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the food processing and packaging industry is growing very fast in an unregulated manner or is regulated by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the methods adopted to monitor hygiene and quality of food processing units;
- (c) whether the Government/FSSAI has a mechanism to check or regulate the use of harmful chemicals and preservatives dangerous to human health; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a): Ministry of Food Processing Industries has informed that during the last 5 years ending 2017-18, Food Processing sector has been growing at an Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR) of around 8.41 per cent similarly, as per Department of Commerce, the food packaging industry is also growing at 13-15% annually.

The mandate of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is to lay down science-based standards for articles of food and for regulating their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import for ensuring availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption in the country. In terms of Section 31 of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, no food business operator shall commence or carry on any food business without a valid license or registration.

(b) to (d): Quality and safety standards of various categories of food products have been prescribed under Food Safety and Standards Act, Rules and Regulations made thereunder. These are enforced by the Food Safety Departments of States/UTs to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food in the country.

Sanitation and Hygiene standards for various food sectors are specified in Schedule 4 of Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration) Regulations, 2011. Safety Standards, including Maximum Residue Limits (MRL)/tolerance limits for various Pesticides, antibiotic residues, veterinary drugs, heavy metals etc. in food products are specified in Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011.

Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations place restriction on sale of certain ingredients such as use of calcium carbide for ripening fruits. Certain additives/preservatives such as potassium bromate are not included in list of permitted additives.

Regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and random sampling of food items from all sources viz. manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, vendors etc. is being done by officers of State/UT Food Safety Departments and samples are sent for analysis to recognised laboratories. Where samples are found to be non-conforming, recourse is taken to the penal provisions under Chapter IX of the Act.

FSSAI has also notified Food Safety and Standards (Food Safety Auditing) Regulations, 2018 and empanelled auditors for audit of food business establishments for checking compliance of Schedule 4 requirements. Third party Audits are meant to reduce the burden on the regulatory inspection conducted by Central or State Licensing Authorities and also encourage efficient self-compliance by the food businesses.

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