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The Scientific Association Dedicated to Analytical Excellence

Possible Areas of Co-operation

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Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006 & Possible Areas of Cooperation



Laws relating to Food Sector:-

1. The Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act, 1954.
2. The Fruit Products Order, 1955
3. The Agricultural Produce (Grading & Marketing) Amendment Act.,1986
4. The Standards of Weights & Measures Act, 1976 and Standards of Weights & Measures (Package Commodities) Rule, 1977
5. The Vegetable Oil Products (Control) Order, 1947
6. The Edible Oil Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998
7. The Solvent Extracted Oil, Deoiled Meal & Edible Flour (SED) (Control) Order, 1967.
8. Legal Metrology Rules (PCR)
9. BIS requirements for mandatory food products
10. Any other order issued under Essential Commodities Act, 1965

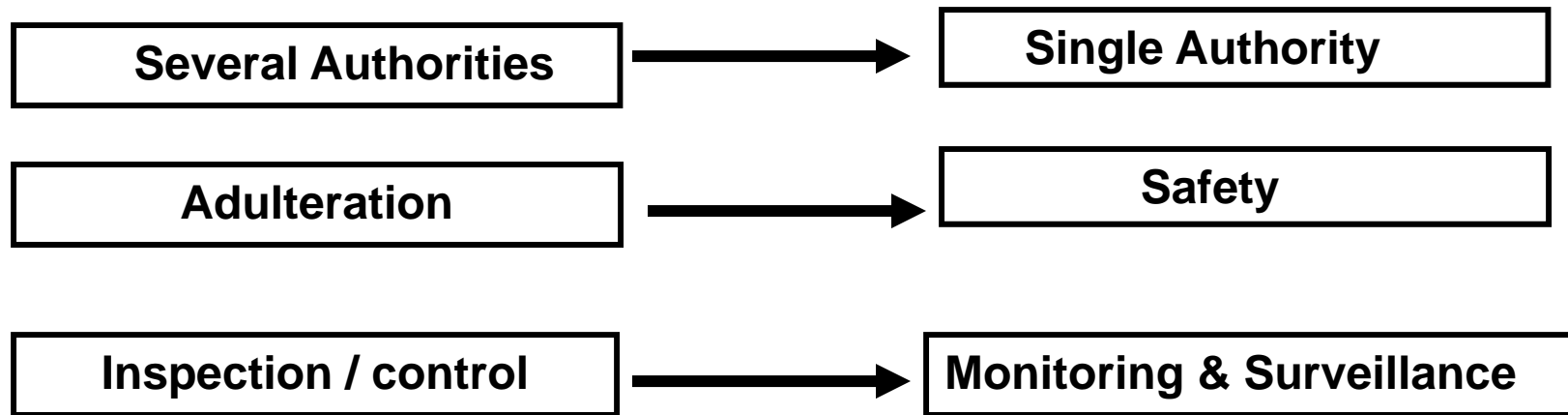
General Perception of Trade and Industry

- The multiplicity of legislations confuses the users of the products and creates problem for producers as well.
- Differing philosophies and approaches adopted by different organizations engaged in standard formulation, certification, inspection and testing result in wastage of valuable resources .
- The multiplicity of organizations in the same area results in overlapping of the functions and this, in turn, creates confusion and complication among the producers and consumers at national and international level.
- Lack of clarity about the standards as well as quality level of Indian goods for trading in the national as well as international market often results in rejection of the products at the point of exports.
- Again the emphasis of these food laws had been primarily on detecting adulteration.

FOOD SAFETY STANDARD ACT, 2006

- The need for a Single Regulatory Body and an Integrated Food Law.
- The Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006 - an Act to consolidate the laws relating to food.
- The Act has a 3-tier structure, an Apex Food Safety and Standards Authority, a Central Advisory Committee and Scientific Panels and Committees.
- The Act lays more emphasis based on science and participatory decisions and adopting contemporary approach consistent with the global environment in standard setting and implementation.

Critical Shifts- PFA to FSSA



Highlights of the Act.

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to regulate the food Sector
- Food Safety Standards Authority assisted by several scientific panels and a central advisory committee to lay down standards for food safety.
- The standards to include specifications for ingredients, contaminants, pesticide residue, biological hazards and labels.
- State Commissioners of Food Safety and other local level officials to enforce the law.
- Every entity in the food sector is required to get a licence or a registration under the Act

Goals of FSSAI

- Consumer safety
- Healthy Nation
- Enabling Innovation
- Reducing load on regulatory authorities and moving towards self regulation
- Larger share in global food trade



FSSAI: Operating Mechanism

The Authority consists of a Chairperson and the twenty-two members in which one-third will be women members.

The administrative structure of the authority is headed by CEO who is responsible for:

- (a) Day to day administration
- (b) Drawing up proposals for the Food Authority's programme.
- (c) Implementing the work programme and decisions of the authority.
- (d) Ensuring provision of appropriate scientific, technical and administrative support for the scientific committees and panels.
- (e) Preparation of the statement of revenue and expenditure and execution of budget of the authority etc.

CEO is assisted by a number of officers in discharging his duties.

Duties & Functions of Food Authority(FSSAI)

- To regulate and monitor the manufacture, processing, distribution, sale and import of food so as to ensure safe and wholesome food.
- To prepare the standards and guidelines in relation to article of food.
- To set the limits for use of food additives, crop contaminants, pesticide residues, residues of veterinary drugs, heavy metals, processing aids, my co-toxins, antibiotics and pharmacological active substances and irradiation of food.
- To formulate guidelines for accreditation of certification bodies engaged in certification of food safety management system for food businesses.
- To set procedure and ensure enforcement of quality control.

- To conduct survey of enforcement and administration of this Act in the country;
- To prescribe food –labeling standards including claims on health, nutrition, special dietary uses and food category systems for foods.
- To undertake risk assessment, risk communication and risk management.
- To provide scientific advice and technical support to the Central Government and the State Governments in matters of framing the policy and rules in areas of food safety.

Possible Areas Of Co-operation

Strengthening Infrastructure of Labs for Testing:

- There have been concerns over microbiological contaminants, namely food and water-borne diseases, diarrheal diseases, mycotoxins, natural toxins, pesticide residues etc.
- Compliance with international standards and export inspection requirements has become a mandatory prerequisite to achieving global competitiveness in terms of quality and acceptability of the Food items.

- Unfortunately, for a country of over 1.2 billion population, the current level of infrastructure for testing referral services, development of standards and equipments is totally inadequate. The no. of laboratories in the country (India) is insufficient.
- Most of the Labs lack world class facilities and infrastructure. Many labs are not equipped with basic facilities such as testing for heavy metal contamination and other toxic contaminants in food items. Further testing manuals do not properly prescribe parameters and procedures. The lack of clarity on specific requirements often results in rejection at the point of export/ import.

Food Testing Labs in India

Food Testing Labs in India	Number
Central Govt/State Govt & Local Bodies	84
Agmark Labs	23
CSIR Labs	12
Indian Institute of Packaging	4
Ministry of Food Processing Industries	1
Export Inspection Council	4
BIS	4
ICAR	4
Consumer Assistance Labs	5
Pvt Testing Labs	22
Vanaspati Units (only edible oils),operational	120
Solvent Extraction Units with Refining facilities, Operational(only edible oils)	400

Harmonization of Indian Food Standards with Internationally Recognized Standards.

Complete alignment of PFA with internationally recognized standards like codex standards may not be possible due to differences in dietary habits etc.. but, nevertheless, there are areas where harmonization of Indian standards with codex standards would enable improvement of quality standards. encourage product innovation and increase acceptance of Indian products in the global market. A phase wise approach for harmonization of food standards with international standards like codex could be adopted, namely

- Phase 1:- Foods which have export potential or which may be imported to address shortages / demand.
- Phase-II:- foods meant entirely for domestic consumption.

As a logical corollary, there is a need for a mechanism for closer coordination of the work on food standards undertaken by the International, government and Non-Government Organizations

Upgradation of Laboratories

There is need for a review of the existing position, laboratories which could be upgraded so as to enable proper testing and to what extent the existing labs need to be upgraded and new facilities to be created. The upgradation of Labs includes:

a) Management requirements; namely

- i) Organization of the lab such as organizational structure describing duties, responsibilities and authorities of management and other lab. personnel.
- ii) Supervision- Documented system for providing effective supervision of the testing activities carried out by individual analysts.
- iii) Integrity - policies & procedures to be in place to avoid involvement in any activities that would diminish credibility, confidence, impartiality and operational integrity.
- iv) Document Control- System for approval and issue of all internal procedures etc.
- v) Review of requests etc.
- vi) Sub-contracting of tests – In case of testing work for which the lab is not equipped as per regulatory requirement, the Lab could sub contract the work to another Lab, which is equipped for the purpose as per regulatory requirement, subject to certain ceiling

■ Technical Requirement:

General:

- ✓ To ensure competence of all those who operate specific equipment's, performed tests and/calibrations .
- ✓ To prescribe and ensure educational qualification, experience and/ demonstrated skill as per individual testing section requirements.
- ✓ To have a system for initial and ongoing training of the individuals whose work will have influence on the quality of testing .
- ✓ To document a procedure for identifying training needs. To maintain job descriptions for managerial , technical and key support personnel .

Chemical:

- ✓ To be headed by a person with post graduate degree in chemistry or equivalent or a bachelors degree in Chemistry or equivalent with adequate(say 5 years) experience.
- ✓ Ability to interpret Test Results.



- **Microbiological:**

- ✓ To be headed by a qualified Micro biologist (Post Graduate/ Graduate with adequate experience/demonstrated skill).
- ✓ Ability to interpret Test results.

- **Accommodation & Environmental Conditions:**

- ✓ Lab facilities to include proper accommodation, spaced layout , environmental conditions, energy and water sources ,biological sterility , electrical supply etc..
- ✓ Adequate and proper lighting to be made available.
- ✓ There has to be effective separation between neighbouring areas in which there are incompatible activities.

Need for Regular Training Program.

- There is a need for regular training program to be conducted for all those involved in/associated with the implementation of the food safety measures so as to keep them aware of the changes/developments in this regard. Training of food inspectors on the GMP, GHP and HACCP should be made mandatory so that they are aware of the latest developments in food standard, new products and laboratories network. They should be mandated to provide regular feedback to the regulatory authorities regarding issue with compliance of the implementation of standards. The overall approach has to be positive, trying to find solution to the problems and not simply trying to find fault.
- Tiny, Small and medium scale industries do not have the technical expertise to track the regulatory changes. It is important to design special training program for them to update the products and processes so as to be able to comply with the specified quality / hygiene standards.

Need for a Data Bank

- There is need for compilation of information about the national and internationally recognized standards that are available, dietary issues, nutritional status of population particularly of vulnerable group (children, pregnant women etc.), benchmark surveys and studies available.
- Very little data are available on the effect of exposure of population including vulnerable group to chemical contaminants, cumulative, low level exposure to multiple contaminants, emerging safety hazards namely microbiological contaminants and new technologies (food irradiation, genetic engineering).

Development of Simple, Reliable Analytical Methods

- AOAC is deeply involved in the development of unambiguous, validated standard methods in infant formula & adult nutritionals.
- There are other areas where also there is need for development of simple, reliable analytical methods which could be positioned as, for example, codex recognized methods. Genetically modified foods are one such important emerging area.

Development of Simple Test Kits

- It is a bitter fact that despite a no. of measures taken by the Govt. , there is no evidence that the incidence of adulteration of foodstuffs or of marketing of sub-standard products has declined to any significant extent.
- Adulteration of food, per se is, not a static phenomenon. It is a dynamic one which changes continuously, depending upon the cost of the material and many other factors. There is a need to improve the existing methods, innovate newer ones for reliability, ease of operation and cost of analysis.
- It is necessary to promote consumer awareness so as to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food at reasonable prices. For this purpose simple tests which are indicative and reliable, quick, easy and cost-effective are essential. Test kits are valuable in such situations.



Thank you