

Report of Workshop on Food Safety Management Systems in Places of Worship

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
New Delhi

9/14/2016

INTRODUCTION:

A place of worship is a specially designed structure or consecrated space where individuals or a group of people such as a congregation come to perform acts of devotion, veneration, or religious study. Hence, ensuring food safety in these places is a major component and helps to aid in the health of thousands of the devotees who are visiting the temple.



The work-shop was conducted with the following objectives to

1. Ensure hygienic preparation and packaging of Prasad and/or food served in Places of Worship
2. Ensure the importance and need of food safety and hygiene, personal hygiene, cleaning disinfecting and handling waste.
3. To generate awareness about the sanitary and hygiene requirements as stipulated in Part V of Schedule 4 Food Safety Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Business) Regulations, 2011.
4. Ensure packaging and Labelling of Prasad in compliance with FSS (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011.
5. To deliberate on the Food safety management system (FSMS) implementation for the Prasad and the food served at major places of worship
6. To understand the existing Food Hygiene and Safety practices in Places of Worship.
7. To develop an action plan for FSMS implementation in consultation with the stakeholders.
8. To roll out FSMS in Places of Worship pan India.

CEO, FSSAI chaired the Workshop and Chairperson, FSSAI delivered the welcome address and opening remarks about the importance of the Project.

Participants:

The Participants includes representatives from various Places of Worship from Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra and, Tamil Nadu and members representing AFST chapters of Delhi, Hyderabad, Kerala and Mumbai and Food Safety Officials from Assam, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra and Punjab participated and presented their views about FSMS implementation in Places of Worship.

The session started with the discussion about the need, goals and objectives of the project, hazard management in the places of worship, gaps and challenges and further action plans in implementing the FSMS in Places of Worship. The Places of Worship were apprised of the need for them to get registered or licensed under FSSAI based on the capacity of the food prepared and served as detailed in the FSS Act, 2006 and to ensure safety and hygiene parameters are followed as provided in the FSS Regulations, 2011.



Food safety in places of worship in Maharashtra

The session continued with the presentation by Assistant Commissioner, FDA Maharashtra, highlighting the major religious places in Maharashtra, the approach, the initiatives, the challenges in FSMS implementation and Food Safety awareness programmes to food handlers with the active involvement of the college students and the implementation of FSMS plan by Vitthal Rukmini Mandir Samiti Maharashtra.

Food safety in places of worship in TN

The Commissioner from Hindu Religion and Charitable Endowments Department, Tamil Nadu shared the existing food safety practices in Tamil Nadu and gave an insight about various types of food items prepared and distributed in temples and free meal scheme. He stated that all the Prasad items were prepared in hygienic kitchens equipped with modern gadgets such as streamers, gas stoves, vegetable cutting machines, mixies & grinders. The cooks and their helpers were educated to maintain personal hygiene. Personal hygiene & health of cooks, their helpers & food serving staffs are periodically checked. The quality of food items are checked by officials. The major temples in Tamil Nadu are equipped with RO System for purified drinking water. The prasad is sold by authorized private agencies in temple premises to the devotees and the temple administration is strict in ensuring quality of the food supplied.

FSMS plan in Gujarat

The FSMS plan in the temples namely Shri Kashtabhanjan Dev Hanumanji Temple at Salangpur Dist. Botad(Gujarat), Shri Somnath Temple Dist. Gir-somnath (Jyotirlinga) Gujarat, Vadta Shri Swaminarayan Temple Dist. Nadiad Gujarat, Shri Arashuri Ambaji Mata Devasthan Trust, Ambaji was discussed. The process and place of Prasad

preparation, hygienic status of the kitchen staff and serving staff and the packaging and storage of prepared Prasad and food safety training for kitchen staffs in the temple was also discussed.

FSMS implementation in Siddhivinayak temple and Shirdi by AFSTI, Mumbai

AFST Mumbai chapter initiated the project 'Ashirwad' at Siddhivinayak Temple, Mumbai with the help of ICT Mumbai and FDA Maharashtra supported by FSSAI. The scope of the project at Siddhi Vinayak Temple included product Standardisation, process Standardization, FSMS implementation to ensure product /Catering safety, training and registration / licensing of all vendors in the temple premises



Vendor training programme with the support of the State FDA was provided to train all the vendors, in the temple premises, on basics of food safety and hygienic handling, Stock rotation and FEFO, record keeping and product quality standardization, benefits of FSMS Implementation to the Pilgrims and action forward towards the implementation of FSMS was also discussed.



A team of 10 food Technologists with FDA Staff also visited 'Prasadalaya' **Shirdi Sansthan**, where food is cooked for about 45000 persons a day and are involved in implementing FSMS there.

A presentation was made by Mr. Prashant Nilyam from Ecolab about the cleaning and sanitation program and training for food handlers. Video bytes from 12 participants were taken on their views and suggestions about the project.

Dr. RBN Prasad, President, AFST chaired the post lunch session to obtain inputs from the representatives of various places of worship, and their expectation from FSSAI and AFST to roll out FSMS plan successfully in places of worship. Each state representatives shared their views and issues related to the implementation of FSMS which are captured below:

S.No	State	Suggestions/ Issues	Expectations from FSSAI
1	Tamil Nadu	<p>Sale of prasadam in the stall run by the vendors</p> <p>Specific standards for the raw materials, Pest control system and SOP for preparation and packaging area.</p> <p>Temples should be equipped with the regional lab for a group of temples in a particular region for checking the quality of raw ingredients, end product and other processing operations. The labs should also be equipped with the all the necessary equipments and technically qualified person.</p> <p>Holy water: in "MAHAMAGAM" the holy water is given as Prasad, hence its quality to be ensured.</p> <p>Temple Cleaning/ Food Area Cleaning. The employees are recruited on outsourced basis.</p>	<p>Training to the vendors</p> <p>There should be guidelines for raw materials received in the temples.</p> <p>Training of the testing personnel</p> <p>FSSAI should have a mandate that all the temples should use purified water as holy water.</p> <p>A standardised training programme is required.</p>
2	Gujarat		FSSAI should make the module for food safety in temples for the state administration.

3	Chattarpur Temple, Delhi.		<p>Quality control lab for checking the quality of raw materials.</p> <p>Training for kitchen persons with respect to food safety management system.</p>
4	Jhandewalan Temple, Delhi.		<p>FSSAI should develop the Quality control parameters for checking the quality of raw materials.</p> <p>Training for the kitchen staffs in the temple and vendors.</p>
5	Punjab		Training for the kitchen staffs in the temple and vendors
6	Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee		Training for the kitchen staffs in the temple and Prasad distributors.
7	Maharashtra		FSMS should be a movement and available knowledge to be disseminated.
8	J&K	<p>Labelling provisions of Prasad especially the best before date.</p> <p>Procurement of the raw materials for the Prasad should be as per FSSR requirements/guidelines.</p> <p>The Prasad given in the temple in the form of puffed rice and dry fruits. Hence, its quality should be maintained properly.</p> <p>The water supplied in the temple for devotees for drinking purpose should be purified.</p>	
9	Assam	-	<p>Training for the kitchen staffs in the temple with respect to the FSMS is mandatory.</p> <p>Thorough quality check of all the raw materials and the</p>

			finished products.
10	Uttar Pradesh	The water served in the temple should be potable. The water is processed through RO plant/other purification systems.	Awareness of GHP and GMP should be given to all the temple staffs.

Way Forward

CEO, FSSAI expressed his heartfelt thanks and appreciated the participants for the interest they have shown in this project and promised to move forward to improve the situation of food safety in POW.



The following points for future course of action were summarized:

- The state administrations should identify 4-5 major temples in their States (initially 50 temples across the Country) for implementation of FSMS plan.
- Representatives from temple to provide the name of the temples in their respective States.
- Development of a questionnaire in co-ordination with AFST/Ecolab for seeking information from PoW on the status of Food safety and hygiene in these places and assistance/support required from FSSAI/State FDA.
- Identification of at least one person responsible for maintaining food safety and hygiene in each PoW. This has to be identified by each PoW and the person so nominated could undergo specialized training in FSMS organized by FSSAI/ approved training partners. The trained personnel would in turn be expected to train the personnel engaged in food handling in their PoW.
- Development of training document (tool kit) detailing the GHP/GMP to be followed by food Handlers in PoW, training duration etc. This would be done by AFST/Ecolabs. The tool kit would need to be suitably modified for each PoW depending on the kind of food/prasadam prepared and also the existing conditions prevailing.
- Identification of trainers from AFST/ other volunteers from the various State Chapters of AFST who would be involved in FSMS implementation in PoW.

- Identification of nodal officer (s) from each State FDAs for supporting and guiding in the FSMS implementation in the PoW.
- Involving college students with Food technology, home science, and food science and nutrition background as volunteers for Food safety training to the vendors.
- To create a Whats App group to share initiatives, ideas and issues.
- To develop a Web portal to assimilate and disseminate food safety information pertaining to PoW.
- The FS message can be disseminated to the devotees through various mode of communication (banners, posters, leaflets, TV tickers, radio jingles etc.)
- To conduct workshops/training for kitchen staff and vendors for improvement of hygiene status in identified major temples.
- Initiation of implementation of FSMS in PoW with support of AFST/State FDAs

Visit to the Akshardham Temple, Delhi:

Fourteen participants including FSSAI staff visited Akshardham temple's Kitchen (where food is made and served to the people). The kitchen was well maintained. The raw material storage area, processing area, and the end product serving area were inspected. In the storage area all the raw materials were kept covered, labelled and well packed. The food was prepared and served in a hygienic manner. All the kitchen staff and the food handlers were wearing gloves and cap while handling the food.
