FSSAI training food businesses to improve food safety standards

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has taken up a nationwide training programme to increase the capacity of food businesses towards improving standards of food safety, FSSAI CEO Pawan Agarwal has said.

He said particularly, small food businesses are not even aware what steps should be taken towards raising food safety standards. So, we have taken up a massive programme for training and capacity building in food businesses. Once that happens, the standards of food safety will improve. It (training) has already begun across the country," Agrawal told PTI on the sidelines of an event.

All food businesses are needed to have at least one person as food safety supervisor who has to be trained and certified as per FSSAI's curriculum, he said.

The training programme has begun across the country several months ago and the plan is to reach out to five to six lakh food businesses in about two years, Agarwal said. "I think we do not want to bother small businesses to begin with. We will focus our attention on medium and large businesses. We will have to reach out to several lakh food businesses, five-six lakh food businesses to begin with. We will do it in a period of one-and-half to two years," he said.

A training course has been developed for each kind of business and there are a total of 19 such courses, he said.

"There are 19 courses. Each kind of business, there is one course. These courses are very short courses. One-day, two days, three-day courses," he said. The enforcement of food safety standards is done largely through the state food safety commissioners and the FSSAI is trying to work with all states to improve the standards of food safety, the FSSAI CEO said.

"Different states are in different stages of evolution. In some states, it is very good. In some states, there is a gap. We are trying to work with all the states so that we can improve the quality of compliance by the food businesses," he said.
The FSSAI and the state authorities work under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, he added.