FSSAI rolls out guidelines for food recall

NEW DELHI: India’s food safety authority has set guidelines for the process to recall food products from markets if found unsafe, putting the onus of implementing any recall on manufacturers and distributors.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) also said it may review the license of the concerned food company if the recall is related to serious health issues.

The new guidelines come more than two years after the controversial recall of Maggi noodles.

FSSAI will monitor the progress of the recall and assess the adequacy of the action taken by food companies. It will also ensure the destruction of the recalled item, according to the guidelines.

“All food business operators as prescribed in the Regulation 7 of Food Safety and Standards (Food Recall Procedure) Regulations, 2017 must have an up-to-date recall plan as provided in Annex (Model recall Plan)- I,” the guidelines said.

“At the time of recall being carried out, the FBO shall submit their detailed recall plan to the CEO, FSSAI,” it said. The concerned company should also inform consumers, depending upon the extent of the recall.

The regulator had sought to expedite the process of putting in place a national framework to recall products when found unsafe or defective in 2015 after it banned Nestle’s instant noodle Maggi on account of high lead content, ordering the FMCG firm to recall all nine of its variants. While the structure and process of the food recall system was first drafted by the FSSAI in 2011 it was not implemented till 2015.