

Changing Consumer Behaviour



Actionable Area

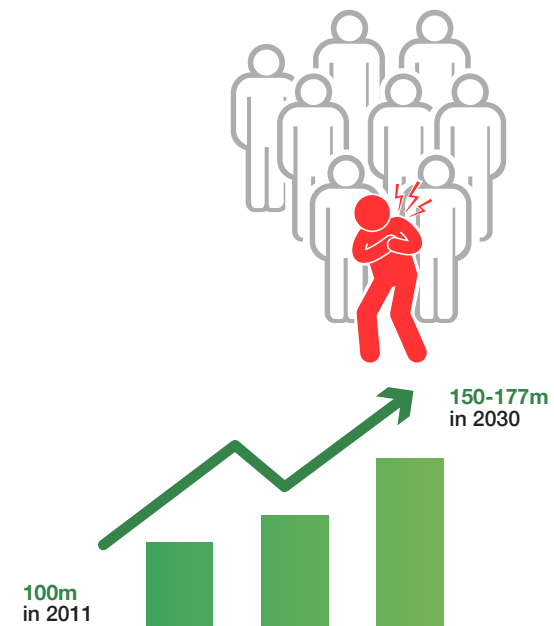
Strengthen 'Eat Right India' movement to bring in behavioural change and enable access to safe and nutritious food.

Issue

- A range of food safety hazards and unhealthy diets contribute to malnutrition and several non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Unsafe food also makes the vicious cycle of disease and malnutrition worse. Foodborne diseases (FBDs) obstruct socioeconomic development by straining health care systems and harming national economies, tourism, and trade. Thus, safe and nutritious food plays a key role in public health and nutrition, and it has environmental impacts too.
- With changing lifestyles, food habits are increasingly driven by convenience and impulse; food is becoming a method of instant gratification rather than a means of nourishment and good health. A diet rich in saturated fat and added salt & sugar can significantly increase the risk of chronic conditions, such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.
- Today, nutrient deficiencies and toxicity from unsafe and poor dietary habits are linked to nearly all modern health conditions. The burden of undernutrition coupled with the increasing incidence of obesity among children is a particular concern. Nearly 62% of deaths in India are caused by diet-related non-communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Unsafe food costs India as much as US\$15 billion annually—a very high economic burden caused by foodborne diseases.

The Rising Burden of FBDs

By 2030 **1/9 people** will fall sick due to food-borne diseases, up from **1/12** in 2011 (globally).



Number of foodborne disease cases in India

Source: WHO, 2019; Wageningen University & Research and ILRI, 2017

Status

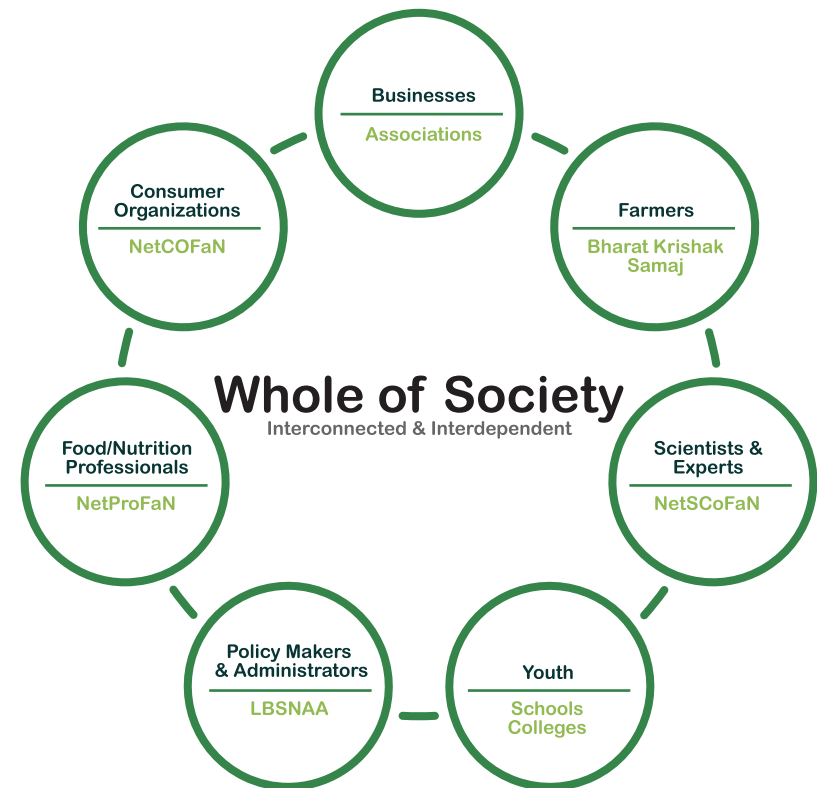
Government Initiatives

- Inspired by an emphasis on preventative healthcare in the National Health Policy of 2017, as well as flagship programs including Ayushman Bharat, POSHAN Abhiyaan, and the Swachh Bharat Mission, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched the "Eat Right India" programme on 10th July 2018. It is an effort started on a large scale to overhaul the country's food system to provide people with safe, healthy, and sustainable food. Eat Safe, Eat Healthy, and Eat Sustainable are the three fundamental themes/pillars of the 'Eat Right India' movement.

Eat Safe: Ensuring personal and environmental hygiene, hygienic and sanitary practices throughout the food supply chain, fight adulteration, prevent/reduce toxins and pollutants in food to acceptable levels, and prevent food hazards in processing and manufacturing operations.

Eat Healthy: Supporting dietary diversity and balance, eliminating hazardous industrial trans-fats from food, reducing salt, sugar, and saturated fat intake, and promoting large-scale fortification of staples to address micronutrient deficiencies.

Eat Sustainable: Promoting locally grown, processed, and seasonal foods, preventing/ reducing food loss and waste, conserving water in food value chains, limiting chemical usage in food preparation & presentation within acceptable levels, and utilising safe and sustainable food packaging.



- Eat Right India encompasses a wide range of initiatives and programmes aimed to promote both the demand for and the supply of safe and healthy food in a sustainable way. While the supply-side interventions aim to build capacities of food businesses to promote self-compliance, the demand-side initiatives motivate consumers to demand safe and healthy food. The initiatives for the production and consumption of food in a sustainable way aim to promote environment-friendly food practices and habits.
- To augment the capacity of the private sector on the supply-side, FSSAI has initiated Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) – a unique program to ensure a trained and certified Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) on each food business premise. As of 9th July 2021, a total of 5,26,059 FSS has been trained by 262 training partners and 2,133 trainers under the FoSTaC Ecosystem.
- Several benchmarking and certification schemes to improve food safety and hygiene standards are in place. Clean Street Food Hub, Clean and Fresh Fruit, and Vegetable Markets Eat Right Station and BHOG (Blissful Hygienic Offering to God) for Places of Worship targeted to clusters of vendors. The Hygiene Rating scheme for Restaurants and Catering Establishments, Bakeries, Sweet and Meat Shops has been put in place for individual foodservice establishments. 130 campuses have been awarded EAT Right campus recognition, 99 are in the pipeline, and 484 applications have been received. Under the Clean Street Food Initiative- 28 street food hubs have been certified, 23 are under process, and 20 states are engaged.
- The three major focus areas are Building Consumer Awareness, Addressing Adulteration, and Enabling Healthy Choices. To build consumer awareness, a settings-based approach has been adopted with programmes like Eat Right Campus and Eat Right School that target individuals in workplaces, colleges, universities, institutes, hospitals, tea estates, jails, and school children in schools. As of December 2021, under Eat Right School initiative, 63,804 schools, 6,923 Health & Wellness Ambassadors have been registered, and 48,058 school activities completed.
- The Eat Right Toolkit has been launched to reach communities at the grassroots level by training frontlines health workers on messages on eating right. To address adulteration, the Detect Adulteration with Rapid Test (DART) Book to test food adulterants at home with simple tests has been developed. The Food Safety Magic Box has been created to test adulterants in a school laboratory setting. A mobile food testing van called Food Safety on Wheels has been launched to reach remote areas and conduct training and awareness activities as well.
- To enable healthy choices, FSSAI has launched mass awareness campaigns to reduce salt, fat and sugar in the diet; “Aaj Se ThodaKam” and Trans-Fat Free India@75 to eliminate trans fats by 2022. Food fortification is also being promoted on a large scale to address micronutrient deficiencies across the country. Several companies have come forward to voluntarily sign pledges on Reducing High Fat and High Sugar, High Salt as an outcome of these efforts.

- To encourage and support responsible production and consumption of food to protect the environment, FSSAI is spearheading initiatives such as Jaivik Bharat to promote authentic organic food; Save Food, Share Food to reduce food waste and promote food donation; Safe and Sustainable Packaging in Food and Beverage Sector to reduce the use of plastics, and Repurpose Used Cooking Oil (RUCO) for safe and healthy use of cooking oil and repurposing used cooking oil to make biodiesel, soap or other useful products.
- FSSAI launched a national campaign, "Swasth Bharat Yatra," on 16th October 2018 on the occasion of World Food Day. 'Swasth Bharat Yatra' was a pan-India Cyclothon, held across 350 locations across the country for connecting 1.33 billion people to promote the message of safe and wholesome food in the country. Over 7,500 cyclists participated in over 18,000 km relay cycle rally travelling across six tracks through almost every state and UT for over 100 days to propagate a powerful message, 'Eat Right India.'
- The Food Fortification Resource Centre (FFRC) was set up to provide information to the various Ministries of the government to fortify the five staples—rice, wheat, oil, milk, and salt—and provide assistance to the states on how these can be disseminated through Public Distribution System, Mid-Day Meals or the ICDS and under the Eat Right India.
- At present, the contribution of milk cooperatives to the fortifiable milk quantity is approximately 220 Lakh Litres per Day (LLPD), while the private sector contributes approximately 196 LLPD. The total quantity can potentially benefit almost 275 million people. Out of this 416 LLPD milk produced, about 150 LLPD gets actually fortified currently, reaching about 100 million people.
- FSSAI has an online food concern redressal system, namely 'Food Safety Connect,' part of the existing online Food Licensing and Registration System (FLRS). This online platform helps consumers register their complaints and feedback about food safety issues related to adulterated food, unsafe food, substandard food, labelling defects in food, and misleading claims & advertisements related to various food products.
- NetProFaN is envisaged as a platform hosted by the FSSAI to leverage the collective strengths of the professional associations and bodies in food and nutrition to foster innovations. This network will leverage its members' resources, skills, expertise, and knowledge to support the national efforts in improving food and nutrition indicators.

Private sector initiative

- FSSAI's efforts in setting standards for fortified staples have created an enabling environment. They have resulted in the inavailability of 157 brands of five fortified staples in the open market with a pan India presence and regional preferences. There has been tremendous traction in Oil and Milk industry, with 47% of the vegetable oil produced by top players in the refined packaged oil market is being fortified. 36.6% of milk is currently being fortified. In all 19 states and 5 union territories have adopted fortification of several commodities under the government safety net programmes (SNP), mainly ICDS, MDM & PDS.
- Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and Tata Trusts and Food Fortification Resource Centre (FFRC)-FSSAI has been working together with the dairy industry to step up their capacity to produce the quality assured milk fortified with vitamins A and D. On the product folio side, major food companies have voluntarily pledged to reformulate packaged foods to reduce the level of fat, sugar, and salt. Also, major food retail players, e-commerce players have pledged to promote healthier options & responsible retail practices.
- For Transfat-free India @75 by 2022, voluntary commitment has been made by Bakery Associations, Halwai Associations, professional associations like Nutrition Society of India, Indian Dietetic Associations (IDA), Association of Food Scientists and Technologists (India).
- The schemes like Clean Street Food Hub, clean and fresh fruit and vegetable markets, Eat Right Station, and BHOG (Blissful Hygienic Offering to God) for places of worship provide opportunities to the private sector and support these activities through their Corporate Social Responsibility Projects. Several private sector organisations have supported street food hubs in Gujarat and other states successfully.

Vision 2030

- **Reduce mortality rate due to non-communicable diseases by making balanced diet, physical exercises and mental health an integral part of the people's life.**
- **Develop an informed society fully aware of sustainable eating and lifestyles in harmony with nature.**
- **Strengthen scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption.**
- **Ensure a healthier, better nourished India through enhanced Public-Private Partnership involving all stakeholders.**

Pathways

IMPLEMENTATION



Adopt Triple E (Engage, Excite, Enable) strategy to incentivize consumers and food handlers for safe, healthy, and sustainable diets.

Continuemass campaigns for promoting informed food choices. Foreg.repository of content to be created with relevant messages in audio and video.

Promote food culture associated with good nutrition by supporting and protecting processed and traditional foods with a nutrition focus, providing information about traditional dishes.

Improve people's awareness about and provide them easy access to food testing facilities/ FSSAI to help authorities expose food frauds.

Promote and strengthen the Indian Food Sharing Alliance – Save Food, Share Food, Share Joy, a social initiative by the FSSAI to help solve India's food waste and hunger crisis by integrating various partner organisations, Food Recovery Agencies, and NGO's.

Handhold and build capacity of the small scale and unorganised sector in lowering the fat, sugar, and salt content of food being produced. Encourage the large and medium scale FBOs to develop and share technology with the small-scale sector.

Strengthen the testing laboratories and ensure a rigorous surveillance plan to detect food contaminants and adulterants.

Increase the outreach of the mobile food testing units to reach far-flung areas to monitor food quality and safety.

Pathways

POLICY



Promote public-private partnership networks and collaborations activities.

Encourage private organizations to mass scale the home food safety test kits, approved by FSSAI, to make them easily available.

Encourage and motivate corporates to utilise their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Funds for farmer producer organisations and social projects related to Eat Right India and adopt them successfully as part of public service.

Make social protection programmes more nutrition-sensitive by augmenting and adapting existing programmes to enable nutritionally vulnerable households to afford and access a healthier diet, provide essential nutrition-related services to vulnerable groups, and stimulate food systems to supply more nutritious foods.

Monitor programs and initiatives and their progress to ensure better implementation and achievement of goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH



Create a repository of traditional nutritious foods and local nutrient-rich produce (fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, seeds) of all the regions for ready reference.

Identify and promote local, traditional nutritious foods. Develop new low-cost nutritious products on the basis of research.