

## Preface

Food is essential for nourishment of our bodies. It is needed for our health and wellness. Food connects us all to our communities, institutions, culture, personal identities and each other. It has sensorial power to ignite creativity and spark joy in us. Food means different things to different people. For a farmer, it is livelihood, for a chef, it is about creating new dishes that people enjoy, for a dietician, it is about nourishing body and soul, for a doctor, it is medicine, for a food technologist, it is about preservation and shelf life. Thus, food could be seen through the lens of a multitude of interconnected food systems. Transforming food systems requires diversity of thought, perspectives, and solutions. At the end of it all, the food system should enable people to eat right, help them to choose the right food and ensure that such food is available. Thus, Eat Right is a food systems approach to not only food and nutrition, but also livelihoods and sustainability.

It is in the above context that Eat Right India movement was started by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in 2017 to help bring healthy and safe eating to the fore at a policy level as well as in the minds of the citizenry. It is grounded in the belief that food is fundamental to India's public health and the environment. With the tag line "*Sahi Bhojan, Behtar Jeevan*" (Right Food, Better Life), it seeks to redefine how the citizens of the country relate to food. Eat Right India strives to make "If it is not safe...it is not food; if it is not healthy...it is not food; and if it is not good for the environment...it is not food" the most significant dialogue related to food across the country.

This book is divided into five sections that set the context of the movement, covering safe eating, healthy and sustainable diets, managing partnerships and emerging issues related to food. Section I of the book outlines the nation's vision for 2050 in the context of food and nutrition. This is followed by a brief chapter on Mahatma Gandhi's views on food and diets, which are very relevant even today. This is followed by a chapter on an overview of Eat Right India movement, bringing out the elements of the movement as it evolved. As a movement, it was found to be completely aligned with thinking around the world on large scale change and system leadership. Chapter 4 looks at the Eat Right Movement in the context of these developments. Finally, chapter 5 provides a historical and global context to the food and nutrition sector.

The global challenge today is to provide all with safe, affordable and nutritious food to alleviate the burden of malnutrition, foodborne and food-related chronic diseases. Section II reminds us that keeping food safe is everyone's business. The basic concepts of food safety, hazards lurking in our food supply, the regulatory system and ensuring food safety in all food categories from the 'farm gate to the plate' is paramount to 'Eat Safe'.

Equally important are the consequences of diets deficient in nutrients and bioactive substances, healthy diets through the lifecycle, factors which determine our food choices and behaviour change strategies to help consumers make healthier choices. 'Eat Healthy' in Section III makes it clear that food is not just a meal, but much more.

But what efforts are needed to eat sustainable diets? The planet is plagued by climate change, which is affecting the nutritive value of crops. Eating local and seasonal, along with conservation of resources while preserving the food ecosystem, helps lessen the burden on the environment. Section IV 'Eat Sustainable' helps understand how sustainable diets play a role in health and nutrition.

Section V illustrates how partnerships should be forged between the government, industry, scientists, educationists and consumers. Co-ordinated efforts are needed in tackling emerging issues related to health, safety and sustainability of diets.

Chapters in this book have been contributed both by practioners and people from the academic community, thus the book blurs the boundary between theory and practice. It also breaks siloes in which food is often divided. It is envisioned as a textbook for ability enhancement or foundation courses in universities to sensitise every student of India to the concept of eating right. It is also a good handbook for officials in FSSAI and State Food Safety departments as well as those who wish to be recruited in these departments. Professionals in the health and food industry can also benefit from this book as it presents a holistic approach to look at issues of health, nutrition and food safety. This book captures the history of FSSAI's effort and brings to light the valuable contributions of several nutrition and food safety experts from across the country.

This book is a culmination of efforts of several professionals committed to the cause of the Eat Right India Movement. We are grateful to Ms Rita Teaotia, Chairperson, FSSAI for her encouragement and support for this project. We are grateful to all Contributors – Research Scientists, Professors of different Universities, Dieticians, Nutritionists, Food Technologists, NetProFaN members, FSSAI Officials and Consultants for their patience and effort in making this book possible. A team of professionals has contributed to each chapter according to their area of expertise. We thank the Reviewers of the book for their valuable comments and suggestions in improving the book. We are grateful to Dr Joshita Lamba Saini for her immense hard work in coordinating this work. We are grateful to Ms Inoshi Sharma, Director, FSSAI and the Eat Right India Team for allowing reproduction of the India Food System Vision 2050 In this book.

We hope the book will encourage the readers to join the Eat Right India movement and help transform the food-scape of our country.

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