

Ignorance of Food Safety Act highlighted at workshop

Special Correspondent

HYDERABAD: The grossly-inadequate levels of awareness about the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 in India was highlighted at a recent workshop.

Experts underscored the need for a two-pronged approach – training and education for food manufacturers and awareness campaigns for consumers.

It was regrettable that after two years of the Act being in force, many consumers and food companies are clueless about its provisions, said Bhadriraju Subramanyam, Department of Grain Science and Industry, Kansas State University, USA, on the sidelines of the workshop.

The absence of mechanisms to help companies adapt to mandatory standard

practices was compounding the problem.

"What would people do if they fell sick after consuming contaminated food bought from a retail outlet? Victims will give the culprits a piece of their mind and alert others, if and when they zeroed in on the cause of discomfort, before moving on," he said, regretting that consumers were unaware that a complaint under the Act could put companies out of business.

Contamination

In the hospitality industry, meat was routinely washed with potassium permanganate solution, without knowing that using it on meat, before freezing it, could lead to 'sanitiser contamination'. "Standard practices require meat to be kept frozen till cooking time," he said.