

TRAINING ON FOOD SAFETY AND DETECTION OF ADULTERANTS IN FOOD

PREAMBLE :

Today we have no explicit indicators to measure the rate in reducing the illness and deaths from non communicable diseases like heart diseases, stroke, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases. It will be no surprise if one comes to know that unhealthy diet is also one of the major reasons for this socio economic disruption.

Food is the basic requirement of all living beings for their sustenance and growth. It is the right of every citizen to have access to clean, safe and nutritious food. The health and productivity of populations depend on the nature of the food they consume and its wholesomeness in terms of their nutritive value. Besides food has to be safe for consumption. It must be free from contaminants of toxic substances and undesirable microbial infestations, and above all should be economically available to the society at large.

Food gives energy but only correct food gives energy & nutrition;
Adulterated and unhygienic food can be dangerous to health;
Various factors render good food to become unhygienic & even poisonous ;
Unsafe food makes citizen unhealthy;
Unhealthy citizens are burden to the national economy.

This article provides information on the initiatives taken by CONCERT. CONCERT is a sister NGO of Consumers Association of India (CAI). Concert will be happy to discuss with any other NGO or SHG ways to propagate this message and expand awareness.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNSAFE FOOD :

Microbial contamination due to unhygienic food preparation and storage
Fungal and insect contamination due to bad storage and poor handling
Contamination arising from industrial pollutants discharged into water bodies.
Contamination arising from improper, excessive or use of non-permitted insecticides, pesticides and agrochemicals
Use of non-permitted food additives like colors etc.
Sale of time-barred and shelf life-expired food products
Wilful adulteration of prepared and primary foods.

WAYS OF ENSURING FOOD SAFETY :

- Increase awareness of the public about the need to adopt food safety standards at all levels
- Advise the people on food safety during mass congregations and through educational institutions
- Discuss food safety, with NGO's and VCO's to spread the message to grass root level.
- Develop food safety standards for all class of food business

Ensure adherence of the rules at all times

Encourage social boycott of all persons, shops, eateries selling unsafe and unhygienic food.

Develop deterrents that will ensure that rules are followed

ANNAM SPOT TEST KIT BY CONCERT

CONCERT - A Centre for Consumer Education, Research, Teaching, Training and Testing is a registered trust in Chennai, India.

CONCERT has developed, after a long research and study, a spot test kit - ANNAM SPOT TEST KIT (FEATURES- ANNEXURE -II) based on IS – 15642 (Part 1 and 2): 2006 – “QUICK METHODS OF DETECTION OF ADULTERANTS / CONTAMINANTS IN COMMON FOOD PRODUCTS”. CONCERT was responsible and has provided necessary information in formulating the above standard, which has been duly acknowledged in the foreword of the above book, published by the BIS, New Delhi

CONCERT has successfully completed a pilot project in 8 Districts of Tamilnadu to train women in detecting adulterants in food products with the support of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs , Government of India .We are now continuing Phase II of the training programme in 11 more districts and we have completed training more than 1500 women at 42 centres in Tamilnadu

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT :

- To create awareness about food adulteration among members of VCO's
- To educate members of VCO's about health hazards due to adulteration
- To inform consumers on the right choice of food in day to day life

To demonstrate method of detection of adulterants using spot test kit
To provide them a spot test kit to promote food safety in their areas

It is expected that persons trained at this training programme will in turn be able to train and create awareness. The best way to prevent willful adulteration is to create a people's movement of awareness and social consciousness. Each one will be committed to train more persons during the project period

THREE DAYS TRAINING PROGRAMME

Food adulteration is a public health problem leading to an economic burden and a major challenge to development. Since, the topics on Food safety are related to everyone's food eating habits, their health and well being, all the trainees wanted to acquire more information and knowledge on all matters related to food. Hence it is suggested that the training programme shall be 3 day's programme .

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT :

Increased awareness about prevention of food adulteration among public;
Increase in demand for Genuine and healthy food;
Decrease in health hazards due to reduction in food adulteration;
Improvement in the health of the members of their family.

PROJECT EXECUTION:

The programmes may be organized in selected areas of any State to sensitize the VCO groups on the need for food safety. More number of programmes to spread the message rapidly on food safety may be arranged in the subsequent months. One or two programmes in a few regions of the State will indicate the methodology to be adopted for other areas. We could modify our approach if necessary depending upon the feed back we receive from the trainers to ensure dissemination of right information required for them.

Please contact cai.india1@gmail.com for any additional information and to set up a meeting.