

FSSAI gives food delivery cos 2 weeks to de-list unlicensed restaurants

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Regulator FSSAI on Thursday said it has given a two-week deadline to online food delivery companies to de-list unlicensed restaurants.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has also decided to conduct audit of online platforms of food aggregators to check if they are complying with food safety and hygiene norms, it said in a statement.

In a review meeting held on Wednesday, the regulator found that more than 30-40 per cent of food businesses listed on the online platforms do not possess a valid licence despite the companies being told to comply with the norms by July-end, it said.

In many cases, listed food businesses have recently applied for the FSSAI license/registration but still do not possess them. To ensure compliance of the food safety norms, the regulator has given "two-weeks time to these food aggregators" to delist unlicensed/unregistered food businesses and submit a detailed report, FSSAI CEO Pawan Agarwal told.

"This is part of a special drive by the regulator to bring in all food businesses under the FSSAI licensing regime and ensure compliance of the food safety laws," he said.

The FSSAI had recently notified regulations bringing e-commerce aggregator platforms within the purview of the food safety law. He hoped that these platforms will now begin to take food safety seriously from a regulatory standpoint.

Agarwal also appealed to the aggregators to begin to use some of their resources in training and capacity building of restaurants for improving food safety and hygiene rather than focusing only on deep discounts and aggressive marketing.

Last month, the FSSAI had directed leading e-commerce food service providers like Swiggy, Zomato, Foodpanda and UberEats to delist non-FSSAI licensed food business from their platforms by July 31 after receiving consumer complaints. The aggregators were advised to display FSSAI license number on their platform along with name and location of the restaurants.