Infrastructure regarding Food Safety in States

Why in news?

The FSSAI has released the Fourth State Food Safety Index recently.

What is State Food Safety Index?

- FSSAI has developed State Food Safety Index to measure the performance of states on various parameters of Food Safety.
- It was first started in 2018-19 with the aim of creating a competitive and positive change in India's food safety ecosystem.
- This index is based on performance of State/ UT on five significant parameters
    - Human Resources and Institutional Data
    - Compliance
    - Food Testing – Infrastructure and Surveillance
    - Training & Capacity Building
    - Consumer Empowerment

What about the recent index?

- In the 4th index, Tamil Nadu topped the list among larger states, followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra.
- Among smaller states, Goa was the winner, followed by Manipur and Sikkim.
- Jammu and Kashmir emerged top among Union Territories, followed by Delhi and Chandigarh.

How can the States' index be improved?

- **Support of the Centre**- States need the support of the Central government in developing food laboratory infrastructure and enhancing manpower**.**
- **Assistance**- Liberal assistance should be provided to the States and Union Territories as far as laboratory infrastructure and improvement of manpower are concerned.
- **Role of private sector**- The private sector should come forward in a big way to have staff trained at their cost to improve the productivity.
- **Use of ICT**- The participation of information technology majors with the help of non-governmental organisations can be utilised in getting surplus food distributed to the needy.

What are some of the important initiatives for food safety in India?

- **Eat Right India Movement**- to transform the country's food system in order to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable food for all Indians.
- **Eat Right Station Certification**- awarded by FSSAI to railway stations that set benchmarks (as per the FSS Act, 2006) in providing safe and wholesome food to passengers.

- **The Eat Right Research Awards and Grants**- for high quality research in the area of food safety and nutrition in India.
- **PAN-India survey**- for identifying the presence of industrially produced trans fatty acid content in the selected foods has been released.

References

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Quick facts

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- It is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- It is a statutory body established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- Its headquarter is in Delhi.
- The main role of the authority is to regulate and monitor, manufacture, processing, distribution, sale and import of food while ensuring safe and wholesome food to the consumers.
- FSSAI License is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety.

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