Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Food adulteration poses a serious threat to public health and consumer trust. Discuss the role of food safety regulation and enforcement in addressing this challenge in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
10	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Public health risks; Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006; FSSAI and state enforcement; consumer awareness; supply-chain monitoring; deterrence and accountability

Model Answer

Introduction

Food adulteration undermines public health, consumer rights and confidence in food markets. The seizure of allegedly adulterated ghee in Rajasthan highlights the need for effective monitoring and enforcement.

Public Health and Economic Concerns

- Adulterated food may expose consumers to unsafe substances, contaminants and misleading nutritional information.
- Fake labels and the sale of inferior products as genuine goods undermine legitimate businesses and consumer trust.
- Festive demand and complex supply chains can create opportunities for unscrupulous traders.

Regulatory Framework

The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, provides the legal foundation for food safety regulation. FSSAI establishes standards, while state food safety departments conduct inspections, collect samples and take enforcement action. Penalties depend on the nature and severity of the violation.

Way Forward

- Strengthen risk-based inspections and laboratory testing, particularly during festive seasons.
- Improve traceability of ingredients, packaging and distribution channels.
- Ensure prompt prosecution, proportionate penalties and transparent disclosure of confirmed violations.
- Promote consumer awareness, complaint mechanisms and verification of food labels.
- Support small businesses in meeting food safety and labelling requirements.

Conclusion

Effective food safety requires coordinated regulation, scientific testing, strict enforcement and informed consumers. Preventive monitoring is essential to protect public health and maintain trust in India’s food market.

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