

CORPORATE OFFICE

Delhi Office

706 Ground Floor Dr. Mukherjee
Nagar Near Batra Cinema Delhi -
110009

Noida Office

Basement C-32 Noida Sector-2
Uttar Pradesh 201301

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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STATE FOOD SAFETY INDEX (SFSI) 2023

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2023". This topic has relevance in the "Social Issues" section of the UPSC CSE exam.

For Prelims:

What is State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2023?

For Mains:

GS2: Social Issues

Why in the news?

The State Food Safety Index (SFSI) for 2023 has been released by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2023

- The aim behind the creation of the State Food Safety Index is to assess the performance of various states in relation to different aspects of food safety.
- This index is constructed based on five crucial parameters:
 - **Human Resources and Institutional Data**
 - **Compliance**
 - **Infrastructure and Surveillance for Food Testing**
 - **Training & Capacity Building**
 - **Consumer Empowerment**
- To ensure a fair comparison among similar entities, the states are classified into three categories: Large States, Small States, and Union Territories (UTs)
- Starting from 2019, the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has been **annually releasing** the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) on **June 7, coinciding with World Food Safety Day**.
- Notably, the 2023 edition of the index introduced a new parameter called '**Improvement in SFSI Rank**,' which measures the degree of improvement in each state's ranking from the previous year.

Key Findings of SFSI 2023

- Kerala has claimed the top position in the index, with Punjab and Tamil Nadu following closely behind.
- In the category of smaller states, Goa has secured the first position for the fourth consecutive time, with Manipur and Sikkim trailing behind.

- Among the Union territories, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, and Chandigarh have secured the first, second, and third positions, respectively.
- 19 out of 20 large states recorded a drop in their 2023 scores from 2019, indicating a decline in food safety performance across the country.
- The worst drop was seen in Maharashtra, which scored 45 out of 100 in 2023 compared to 74 in 2019, followed by Bihar and Gujarat.
- The steepest fall in scores over five years was observed in the Food Testing Infrastructure parameter, where the average score for all large states dropped to 7 points out of 17 in 2023 from 13 points out of 20 in 2019.
- The only parameter that recorded significant improvement was Training and Capacity Building, where the average score improved to 5 points out of 8 in 2023 from 3.5 points out of 10 in 2019.



About FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India)

Parent Act: Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, the primary legislation governing food safety and standards in India.

Nodal Ministry: FSSAI falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in India.

Primary Aim:

- To ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.
- It does this by laying down science-based standards for articles of food and regulating their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale, and imports.

Functions:

- Establishing and laying down scientific and comprehensive food safety standards for various food products.
- Regulating and licensing food businesses, including manufacturers, processors, distributors, and retailers.
- Inspecting and monitoring food businesses for compliance with the food safety standards and guidelines.
- Providing suggestions to the government in framing the policies related to food safety.
- Protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety.

Sources:

In FSSAI index, nearly all major states slip on food safety compared to 2019 | Business News – The Indian Express

Q1. With reference to State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2023, consider the following statements:

1. The SFSI aims to assess the performance of various states in relation to different aspects of food safety.
2. It is being released by the Food and Drug Administration every year.
3. The recent 2023 report indicates an overall improvement in food safety performance across the country

Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

Q2. Consider the following statements with reference to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India:

1. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India is a statutory body.
2. FSSAI falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Food and Public Distribution.
3. FSSAI lays down science-based standards for articles of food and regulating their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale, and imports.

How many of the abovementioned statements are correct ?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

Q3. Elaborate on the FSSAI's functions and its pivotal role in regulating and supervising food safety in India.

Gaurav Nikumbh