

# Coronavirus scare: Crack down on food linked rumours; curb commotion about corona on curry

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**Coronavirus outbreak:** In the times of faltering worldwide economy, the impact has been felt even on the Food Industry of the country of food lovers. Thanks to novel CoronaVirus [COVID-19]. It has been observed that the Indian (as well as global) meat industry is losing on large-scale (business-to-business) orders. Even various food & beverage players are under the fear that the virus outbreak might affect their annual targets, adversely. Food manufacturers foresee a deep impact of COVID-19 on their businesses in the long run. Transport capacity is already under severe pressure due to increased shipping and freight costs. Retailers are thoroughly monitoring their supply chains in order to fulfill customer demands.

Nevertheless, various food retailers dealing in shelf-stable foods seem to have hit the jackpot. In fact, the Indian wedding industry has also experienced a slump, various trade operators who deal as floral artists, food caterers decoration artists have been complaining about the loss in their businesses.

Is the situation actually that serious or is it just a panic bite?

Are food-manufacturers well-informed about the precautionary measures to be taken? Is there a policy gap? Do hotels and restaurants adhere to the DOs and DON'T's?

Are we aware of what's happening to Indian FOOD-nomics?

Are you stocking up food?

### **COVID-19: Coronavirus cannot nurture in food**

The need of the hour is to create awareness. With the on-going conversations around COVID-19, public health advisories keep coming thick and fast. As scary as this nCoV is, what is dangerous are the misapprehensions related to it.

### **COVID-19: Food linked rumours on social media!**

Globally, a few food-linked rumors are going viral on social media, and this is creating a puzzle in the world of food science. However, there is no proof of the virus spreading through food at present. In fact, there has been no evidence of any respiratory bugs being transferred via food or food packaging in the past. Even the possibility of transmitting COVID-19 from food is exceptionally minimal; there should be low concern of the food supply being infected.

According to Food Safety Authority of Ireland, corona virus cannot nurture in food-they need a host (human or animal) to produce in, and cooking for at least 30 minutes at 60°C kills Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which is a similar COVID-19.

### **Coronavirus scare: Personal hygiene routine practices key in food operations**

Certainly, it is highly possible that contaminated food supervisors could transmit the virus to the food they are in touch with, by sneezing and coughing, or through hand contact. However, this is not likely to occur if food supervisors in food operations stick to the recommended personal hygiene routine practices and regulatory standards, that lower the possibility of contamination of most food borne infections.

Good hygiene and frequent cleaning will avert cross-contamination between uncooked or raw foods and ready-to-eat or cooked foods in the service area or kitchen.

Frozen food products must be eaten only after cooking them rightly. It is advised that food supervisors must notify their firms, avoid cooking food for others, and seek medical assistance if they feel they have warning signs of respiratory ailment. Firms may ask food supervisors to remain till they fully recover.

If food supervisors have travelled abroad to the affected geographies or came in connection with individuals tested positive, they should apprise their firms and seek suitable medical advice from medical experts.

### **Coronavirus outbreak: Are frozen foods safe to consume?**

Food safety measures by World Health Organization intimate that even in affected regions, meat foods can be safely consumed if these products are cooked carefully and appropriately processed during food preparation. Nevertheless, ill animals and animals that have died of illnesses should not be eaten.

A special committee of specialists [by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)] to scrutinize the risks of incidence of COVID-19 in imported food products confirms that food imported into India including from COVID-19 affected nations is safe for human consumption.

### **Coronavirus update: FSSAI on meat consumption**

FSSAI also explained that meat from appropriately cooked, livestock including poultry is safe to consume. The special committee by FSSAI instructs to avoid eating undercooked or raw meat products as well as unprocessed food items. . Food manufacturers have a key role to perform in preventing foodborne diseases; they need to evaluate the possibility of food-borne transmission of COVID-19.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is diligently scrutinizing developments around the covid-19 epidemic. The MoHFW in unification with the wider Ministry of Food Processing Industries and FSSAI must keep an eye out on the situation in order to successively gather and screen evidences from global agencies and scientific groups of any such transmission resulting in COVID-19.

### **Coronavirus Outbreak: Suitable steps to certify the safety of food products**

The Government of India needs to ensure that it takes suitable steps to certify the safety of food products. The concerned authorities should update their web pages as required and update publics of any developments that may poorly affect the safety of food. Active investigations should get started to detect the spring of the outbreak and ways it can be transmitted to humans. We would like to reiterate that the need of the hour is to create awareness and to channelize the right information through the right channels. Right steps need to be taken correctly to avoid chaos in the Indian food and beverage industry.

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