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## Report

### Inter-College Quiz Competition held at GDC Shopian on the theme: "Unmasking Food Fraud: Understanding and Combating Adulteration."

#### Proceedings of the event:

On 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2024, an Inter-College Competition was organized by Food Processing Committee at Government Degree College Shopian under the convener-ship of Dr. Nusrat Masood, Head, Department of Biotechnology on the theme, "Unmasking Food Fraud: Understanding and Combating Adulteration" to commemorate the 6<sup>th</sup> World Food Safety Day 2024. Food fraud and adulteration is increasing day by day. Adulteration is a legal offence and when the food fails to meet the legal standards set by the government, it is said to have been adulterated. As a small initiative, the Food Processing Committee decided to celebrate World Food Safety Day in order to propagate awareness to students and staff, and in the general public.

Prof. (Dr.) Mohd. Shafiq, Worthy Principal GDC Shopian, highlighted the importance of knowledge of food fraud and food adulteration. He emphasized the crucial role of different statutory and regulatory authorities in controlling the menace of food fraud and opined that food safety is the responsibility of all. He praised the efforts of the Food Processing Committee for organizing such a relevant event.



Dr. Zaira, Head, Department of Islamic Studies, anchored the program. She highlighted various issues related to food adulteration and emphasized the potential health risks associated with adulterants frequently found in daily food items. Then Dr. Nusrat, Convener of Food Processing Committee, gave a brief introduction about the event. She warmly welcomed the faculty and participants and briefed the audience with the details of the program. The inaugural address was delivered by Prof. Mahmood Ahmad Tak, Head, Department of Botany. Prof Tak highlighted the various types of adulterants and problems associated with microplastics when we drink tea in paper-cups. He emphasized the importance of natural foods and resolution to avoid paper-cups and other junk foods.

Subsequently there was wonderful and insightful talk by Dr. Rafiq Ahmad Rather, Head, Department of Clinical Biochemistry. His presentation focused on various deceptive practices within the food industry, including concealment, mislabeling, and the grey market. He began by defining food fraud highlighted how food fraud undermines consumer trust and poses significant health risks. He explained the concept of concealment, where inferior or potentially harmful ingredients are hidden within food products to mislead consumers. He provided examples, such as adding non-food substances like chalk powder in flour or watering down milk while adding thickening agents to mask the dilution. The audience learned how these practices not only deceive consumers but can also cause serious health issues. Moving on to mislabeling, Dr. Rafiq highlighted the misrepresentation of food products through incorrect or misleading labels. He discussed the importance of accurate labeling and the role of regulatory bodies in ensuring compliance. He also shed light on the grey market, where genuine products are sold through unauthorized channels. He provided an example of dietary supplements that, when sold in the grey market, might not meet the rigorous standards set by health authorities. The lack of traceability and accountability in these markets further exacerbates the problem. He discussed modern analytical techniques used to identify adulterants and authenticate food products, such as DNA barcoding and spectroscopy. Additionally, he stressed the need for stricter regulations, industry transparency, and consumer education to mitigate these deceptive practices. Dr. Rafiq concluded his lecture by urging the scientific community, regulatory agencies, and consumers to work together in the fight against food fraud. He reiterated that safeguarding the integrity of the food supply chain is crucial for protecting public health and maintaining consumer trust.



His lecture was met with enthusiastic applause, and attendees left with a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding food fraud and adulteration, as well as the collective efforts required to address these challenges effectively

After some light refreshment, the quiz was started by Dr. Zaira and there were 3 rounds. Participants enjoyed the quiz and first position was gained by GDC Shopian 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (Group D), GDC Kulgam got the 2<sup>nd</sup> position (Group C) and 3<sup>rd</sup> was gained by GDC Shopian again(4<sup>th</sup> semester) (Group A).

Dr. Irfan Jamila, Head, Department of Zoology was Jury. She concluded and gave congratulations to the winners. She announced the winners. Prize and certificate was given by our worthy Principal Sir. Vote of thanks was given by Prof Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, Assistant Professor, Department of Botany with a final note on food fraud.

Many distinguished faculty members from guest colleges attended the function. Dr. Aijaz, from GDC Kulgam, Dr. Parvaiz, from GDC Pulwama Boys, Dr. Shabnam, Head, Department of Chemistry, Dr. Gulzar, Dr. Raes, Dr. Sajad, Dr. Rawoof, Dr. Ishrat, Dr. Aashiq from Department of Commerce and Dr. Sheeraz, Department of Economic attended the function.

Concluding, we firmly believe that organizing such an educational event will significantly contribute to the overall development of students and instill in them a sense of responsibility towards ensuring food safety. This program will continue to work unless we have achieved success in this endeavor

  
Convener

Food Processing Committee