

Govt efforts fail to hold down food adulteration

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By Our Reporter

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LAHORE, Dec 16: Despite an expenditure of millions of rupees to combat food adulteration in the provincial metropolis, there has been no significant improvement, Dawn has learnt.

The official record suggests that the set up for food sampling and analysis system and the prosecution of adulterators have been unable to suppress the evil.

Food Department sources said adulteration in food had continued because of the lack of secrecy in the process. They said this enabled the manufacturers and dealers involved to keep track of the samples obtained from them and try to influence the findings.

Department officials said the deterrent penalties prescribed under law were seldom imposed. These include a mandatory three-month imprisonment. Imprisonment for two, three and five years is prescribed for the first, the second and the third offence, respectively. The convicts, however, get away mostly with a fine and detention till the rising of the court.

The food inspectors collecting food samples for analysis under the Pure Food Law are a low-salary people. This makes them vulnerable to bribes and 'influence'.

According to record of the Public Analyst, Lahore, the incidence of adulteration rose from 47.8 per cent in 1947 to 55 per cent in 1949 but fell to 21 per cent in 1956. It rose then to 41.3 per cent in 1960, falling to 26.2 per cent in 1966. It rose to 44.8 per cent in 1972 and an all time high of 51.5 per cent in 1978 after falling to 39.9 per cent in 1975.

The percentage came down to 35.8 in 1985, rising to 41 the next year. It then fell to 34 per cent in 1987, rising to 41.5 per cent in 1990. The percentage of adulterated samples fell to 37.16 in 1994 rising to 45.41 per cent in 1997 and

falling to 37.42 in year 2000.

The year wise record of the number of food samples analysed by the Government Public Analyst since 1947 and the percentage of adulterated samples follows:

YEAR	Number of samples analysed	Percentage of adulterated samples
1947	2,110	47.8
1948	5,445	52.4
1949	9,693	55
1950	12,267	51
1951	10,075	44.3
1952	15,759	40.9
1953	14,519	32
1954	9,491	28
1955	9,382	26
1956	17,193	21
1957	13,875	33
1958	15,815	33.6
1959	17,968	32.3
1960	17,479	41.3
1961	18,481	38.1
1962	8,647	29.7
1963	12,434	28
1964	14,529	28.5
1965	8,405	27.6
1966	9,705	26.2
1967	10,970	32.2
1968	12,508	28.6
1969	8,399	38.5
1970	7,440	41.3
1971	11,240	40
1972	12,402	44.8
1973	20,323	41.4
1974	15,716	41.2
1975	15,789	39.9
1976	19,652	42.1
1977	13,926	45.8
1978	20,039	51.5
1979	17,261	42.1
1980	15,020	43.5
1981	12,949	45.5
1982	19,267	40
1983	22,274	39.6
1984	20,602	39.1
1985	25,112	35.8
1986	27,434	41
1987	26,351	34
1988	26,251	35.2
1989	29,274	36.4
1990	30,681	41.5
1991	29,361	40.44
1992	15,591	35.3
1993	20,757	40
1994	19,127	37.16
1995	19,994	38.32
1996	17,675	43.92
1997	15,900	45.41
1998	15,758	44.49
1999	25,290	40.66
2000	29,115	37.42