

Dated, the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2017

**ORDER**

**Subject: Iron Fillings in Tea.**

The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) had issued an order dated 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2014 in continuation of the statutory advisory dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2014 stating that the limit of iron fillings in Tea remained at 150mg/kg, and advising that the specific prosecution may not be launched up to 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2015 or till further orders, whichever was earlier, in case the iron fillings were within the prescribed limit of 150mg/kg. Again, vide another order dated 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 the time line not to launch prosecution in such cases was extended upto 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2015.

2. Further, vide directions dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2016 issued under Section 16(5) of FSS Act,2006, it was stated that draft standards prescribing a limit of not more than 150mg/kg of iron fillings in Tea were approved by the Food Authority and the draft notification was uploaded on FSSAI's website on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 for inviting comments from the stakeholders. Enforcement Authorities of States/UTs were instructed to implement the prescribed standards as in the draft till issuance of final notification in this regard.

3. FSSAI vide order dated 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 issued an Order stating that due to non-finalization of appropriate and reliable methods of assessment/testing of samples of iron fillings in Tea, and till such time these are finalized, the Enforcement Authorities may carry out inspections in tea factories rather than on retail outlets, etc. to ensure that FBOs involved in the processing / manufacture of Tea operate with the requisite equipment for removal of iron fillings.

4. Vide FSSAI's notification made operational w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2016, an upper limit of 250mg/kg of iron filing in Tea has been fixed. Through the Gazette notification dated 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2016, the Regulation 2.10.1 of Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards & Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 has been amended, *wherein the limit of iron fillings after item (f) under clause (1) and (2), item (g) has been inserted namely 'Iron Fillings (mg/kg) Not more than 250'.*

Rg/v

5. The matter has been examined in FSSAI. It is felt that till a reliable method of assessment/ testing of iron fillings in Tea is finalized, it would not be appropriate to launch prosecutions for non- conformance nor is it proper to pursue or continue with the prosecutions launched under PFA Act / FSS Act prior to issue of FSSAI's Order dated 19.05.2016. Commissioners of Food Safety, All States/ UTs are, therefore, directed not to launch prosecutions for non- conformance of limit of iron fillings for cases where samples were picked up / tested prior to 19.05.2016. They are also advised to withdraw all such prosecutions launched prior to 19.05.2016 either under FSS Act, 2006 or PFA Act, 1954.

This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

  
(Rajesh Singh)  
Director (RCD)

Copy to:

1. Commissioners of Food Safety, All States/ UTs.
2. All Central Designated Officers.

For information: All Divisional Heads in FSSAI, New Delhi.