

Centre issues advisory on testing pulses

[Renni Abraham](#)

NOVEMBER 13, 2018 00:58 IST

State asked to check for excess herbicide in local samples

Mumbai: The Union government issued an advisory to [Maharashtra](#) on October 31 to test samples of locally-grown as well as imported pulses for higher-than-permissible levels of glyphosate, a commonly-used weed killer.

The herbicide, when found in higher-than-permissible levels, has been blamed for Alzheimer's disease as well as obesity, as well as being carcinogenic. The pulses are imported from Canada and Australia.

"The advisory is general in nature and states that there is a possibility of glyphosate contamination being above permissible levels. It has sought tests to determine the same in pulses. The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) will collect samples and get these tested," said Maharashtra Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Parliamentary Affairs and Medical Research, Girish Bapat.

FDA Commissioner Pallavi Darade told *The Hindu*, "The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has asked us to just take samples. We have passed on the circular to the officers in the field and asked them to do so. Depending on the results, we will intimate the FSSAI."

Ms. Darade said the FDA would take three three or four samples across Maharashtra. "We will include wholesalers and retailers and will cover four or five major pulses. The permissible levels differ across pulses and one would need to refer to the Act to identify the specific parameters of individual pulses."

A State secretariat official, however, said that since there were no standards in India, the Codex Standards (prevalent in the USA) was the reference point.

As per the Codex Standards, 2 mg per kg is the permissible limit for black eyed peas (chawli), 5 mg per kg for red lentils (masoor dal), 5 mg per kg for green peas (vatana), 5 mg per kg for split chick peas (chana dal) and 20 mg per kg for soyabean, the official said.