

Business Standard

Limit for iron particles in tea increased to 250 mg/kg: FSSAI

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Food safety regulator [FSSAI](#) has raised the upper limit for iron particles in tea powder to 250 mg per kg from the existing 150 mg, with effect from current month.

Iron fillings enter tea due to wear and tear of the processing machinery. The continuous presence of iron filings in tea has raised safety concerns and there have been many demands to fix an upper limit.

In a circular, Food Safety and Standards Authority of [India](#)(FSSAI) said: "The revised limit of iron filings in tea up to level of 250 mg per kg has been approved by the Scientific Committee."

These standards of iron filings in tea have been made operational with effect from this month. They will supersede the earlier limit operationalised on April 22, 2016, it said.

The limit has been raised after taking into consideration the comments and suggestions received from various stakeholders, it added.

[FSSAI](#) had recently conducted a large-scale laboratory analysis of tea powder for determining the limit on iron filling.

The tea leaves are dried in a sieve fitted with mesh and leaves are cut using iron rollers. Factories use huge magnets to remove iron fillings from tea powder.

Tea production in India, the world's second largest tea producer after China, stood at 795.89 million kg during April-September period of this fiscal, while 101.04 million kg of tea was exported in the same period.

The country had produced 1,233 million kg in the entire 2015-16 fiscal, of which 232.92 million kg was exported.