



Finally, FSSAI issues order relating to determining ‘iron filings’ in tea

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Ashwani Maindola, New Delhi

After years of deliberations, the FSSAI has issued an order related to the method for determination of ‘iron filings’ in tea and urged the laboratories to use the method with immediate effect.

The scope of the method, approved by the ‘Scientific Panel on Methods of Sampling and Analysis’, was to lay down a procedure for the determination of iron filings in tea. The method approved by the FSSAI can be applied to all tea samples for iron filings, reads the order.

The principle applied for the method says that iron filings or iron particles may appear during the manufacture of tea and affect its quality. This method follows the gravimetric estimation of iron particles using a magnet with strength of around 1,000 gauss.

The method describes the sampling of the tea for the impurity and can be applied on unit pack of 250gm.

According to an official with the FSSAI, the test method was standardised and validated. However, it would be the responsibility of the respective testing lab to verify the performance of this method onsite and ensure that it gives proper results before putting this method into use.

If any issue related to the method arises, it can be brought to the notice of the scientific panel on method and sampling & analysis, for consideration, reads the order.

The matter related to iron filings was under consideration for some time as there was no method to analyse the sample previously. In 2017, the FSSAI has even issued an order withdrawing its previous order of prosecutions for iron filings in tea. The explanation in 2017 was given that there wasn’t a reliable method for testing iron filings in tea.