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FSSAI-Accredited Labs To Monitor Quality Tea For Markets

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GUWAHATI: The tea industry is now equipped with laboratories accredited and recognized by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to ensure sale of quality teas both in domestic and foreign markets.

Tlabs, a chain of labs under the Tea Research Association (TRA) in Kolkata, is a pesticide-residue laboratory, which has been recently notified by FSSAI. These laboratories are being used by the tea industry and many merchant exporters to test their samples of tea meant for exports.

The lab in Kolkata has been playing a crucial role in monitoring tea quality since its inception. The basic job of the lab is pesticide-residue testing and testing of quality parameters and to ensure compliance of teas for sale within India and abroad.

“The Tea Board of India and the Indian Tea Association have now given the highest emphasis on selling quality teas. The Tea Board has already taken various steps to prevent sale of sub- standard and spurious teas. The FSSAI accreditation to Tlabs will be a big boost to maintain quality brew,” an official associated with the tea industry said.

The official said the Tea Board is now very firm to take all possible actions to stop production of sub-standard tea. “Production of low quality tea has resulted in decline in the number of tea drinkers. In a bid to attract the younger generation to drink tea the board will not allow anyone to market sub-standard tea,” the official said.

FSSAI has set the quality criterion for different Indian tea (black, green and Kangra) with regard to fitness for human consumption. It has also time to time modified and updated the different parameters in respect to quality which will be suitable for Indian consumers as well as to facilitate smooth tea trade.

Various quality parameters, including checking of pesticide residues, presence of heavy metals, natural toxic substances and iron fillings, are being currently monitored under FSSAI.