

Pesticide Management Bill - 2008

What is the issue?

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- Recently, deaths due to pesticide spraying has been reported.

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- This has brought the focus on the pending 'Pesticide Management Bill' that seeks to replace the Insecticides Act, 1968.

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What are the highlights of the bill?

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- The bill seeks to improve the regulations in the manufacture, inspection, testing and distribution of pesticides.

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- It proposes a system of licensing and also sets the criteria for classifying pesticides as misbranded, sub-standard, or spurious.

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- Constituting a Central Pesticides Board to advise the government on pesticide related regulation is also among its provisions.

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- Fixation of tolerance limits by FSSAI for pesticide residues on crops and commodities is touted to become mandatory.

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- State governments are envisioned to implement the set-up.

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What are the changes being considered?

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- The Bill defines a pesticide as any substance used to destroy or control pests in agricultural commodities or animal feeds.
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- So, pesticides used for non-agricultural purposes, such as health care, are outside the ambit.
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- Hence, the Parliamentary Standing Committee has recommended that a broader definition for the same.
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- While FSSAI has been mandated for fixation of residual pesticide limits, the relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act are yet to be enforced.
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- Also, the Bill does not specify penalties for pesticide inspectors or currently - which needs alteration.
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Source: PRS

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