

Revised Pesticide Residue Limits in Tea

Prelims – *Current events national and International importance | Environment*

Why in News?

FSSAI proposed revised Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for Acetamiprid and Imidacloprid in tea under draft regulations published on October 16, 2026.

- **FSSAI** – It is the statutory authority established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006,
- **Nodal ministry** – Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Proposed MRLs in Tea** –
 - Acetamiprid – 20 mg/kg (20 ppm).
 - Imidacloprid – 50 mg/kg (50 ppm).
- These limits are proposed standards and remain subject to finalisation.
- **Maximum Residue Limit (MRL)** – It is the highest legally permissible concentration of pesticide residues in a food commodity, established through scientific risk assessments.
 - Acetamiprid – It is a neonicotinoid insecticide used to control insect pests in crops.
 - Imidacloprid – It is a neonicotinoid insecticide used to control various agricultural insect pests.
- **International Standards** – The proposed Acetamiprid limit is lower than the cited limits of Japan (30 ppm) and the United States (50 ppm).
 - The Imidacloprid limit has been formulated with reference to international Codex standards.
- **Codex Alimentarius** – It is a collection of international food standards developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, established by the FAO and WHO.
- **Earlier Regulatory Measures** – The FSSAI revised pesticide residue standards in 2024 and previously delisted 13 pesticides identified as having higher toxicity.
- **India context** – India's average pesticide consumption is reported to be below 0.5 kg per hectare, compared with the cited global average of 2.38 kg per hectare.
- **Significance** – Revised MRLs aim to strengthen food safety, protect consumers, promote responsible pesticide use and provide regulatory clarity to tea growers, processors and testing laboratories.

FSSAI REVISED PESTICIDE LIMITS IN TEA



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1 WHY IN NEWS?

 FSSAI proposed revised MRLs for **Acetamiprid** and **Imidacloprid** in tea (Oct 16, 2026).

2 PROPOSED MRLs IN TEA

Acetamiprid 20 mg/kg (20 ppm) 	Imidacloprid 50 mg/kg (50 ppm) 
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Proposed limits – subject to finalisation.



3 ABOUT FSSAI



- Statutory authority under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- Nodal Ministry: Health and Family Welfare.

4 MAXIMUM RESIDUE LIMIT (MRL)



Highest legally permissible level of pesticide residue in food, based on scientific risk assessment.

5 ABOUT THE PESTICIDES

Acetamiprid  Neonicotinoid insecticide (controls insect pests).	Imidacloprid  Neonicotinoid insecticide (controls agricultural insect pests).
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6 INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

 Japan (Acetamiprid) 30 ppm	 US (Acetamiprid) 50 ppm	 Codex (Imidacloprid) Limit based on Codex standards (FAO & WHO).
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7 INDIA CONTEXT



Pesticide consumption **< 0.5 kg/ha (India)** vs **2.38 kg/ha** (global average).

8 SIGNIFICANCE



- Strengthens food safety.
- Protects consumers.
- Promotes responsible pesticide use.
- Provides regulatory clarity.

Reference

[DD News| Revised Pesticide Residue Limits in Tea](#)



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