

FSSAI refuses to extend order banning use of staple pins in tea bags

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E-Paper

The apex regulator of the country, FSSAI (Food Safety Standards Authority of India), has refused to give any blanket extension for implementing order banning use of staple pins in tea bags. Also, the FSSAI has asked such FBOs (food business operators) involved in manufacturing of such tea bags to submit a plan to implement the order.

In an order issued recently, FSSAI has asked the food business operators involve in manufacturing of tea bags, to comply with the order it had issued in November 2017 asking for a ban on using staple pin in tea bags by January 2018. However, several representations were received by the apex food regulator on its order banning use of staple pin in tea bags and subsequently extension was given to the FBOs until June 30, 2019.



The current order shall come into force on July 1, 2019, wherein FBOs have to discontinue manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import of stapled tea bags. The order said, “Blanket extension of further time period for implementation of order dated November 15, 2017 shall not be given to the FBOs. However, case-to-case basis, FBOs can be heard on base of their commitment.”

The order added that all FBOs manufacturing tea bags are directed to submit their plans, as well, to change over the new system by procuring the new machines or modifying the existing ones.

There are two kinds of tea bags available in the market currently, namely stapled tea bags and knotted tea bags. “The use of staple pins in tea bags poses a potential hazard to consumers, since any loose staple pin consumed inadvertently with tea may cause a serious health hazard,” the previous order by FSSAI stated.

In India, the tea bag industry is estimated to be growing at about 50-60 per cent.

The Tea (Marketing) Control Order, 2003 defines tea bags as packets containing tea in bags made of filter-paper, nylon net and/or any other acceptable material, conforming to international norms and standards, for brewing of tea liquor by direct immersion of such bags in hot or cold water, and commercially known as tea bags.”