

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3659  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH, 2025**

**QUALITY OF INDIAN SPICE BRANDS**

**3659. SHRI SUDHAKAR SINGH:**

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is true that a majority of Indian spice brands and other edible products have failed to meet the required safety standards and if so, the details thereof including company-wise and product-wise data on those that failed quality checks;
- (b) the details of the specific safety parameters on which such food products including spices, failed to meet regulatory standards and contaminants/residues were found to be exceeding permissible limits;
- (c) whether the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has increased the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for certain pesticides and if so, the details of these changes and the rationale behind them; and
- (d) whether the Government has any plans to make food safety regulations more stringent, especially in light of recent food quality concerns and if so, the specific measures being considered to enhance consumer protection?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY  
WELFARE  
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) & (b): Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is fully committed to ensure the availability of safe food products to the consumers across the country. Towards this, FSSAI through State/Union Territories and its Regional Offices conducts regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and random sampling of various food products including spices to check compliance with the quality and safety parameters and other requirements as laid down under Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006, and regulations made thereunder.

In cases where food samples are found to be non- conforming, penal action is taken

against the defaulting Food Business Operators as per the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, Rules and Regulations. The details of unsafe and sub-standard samples found in spice samples analysed in last 2 years are as below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Samples analysed</b>	<b>Unsafe</b>	<b>Sub-standard</b>
2022-23	11979	534	743
2023-24	11919	707	816

(c) & (d): FSSAI has prescribed the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) of pesticides on food commodities including spices under the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulation, 2011. Fixation of MRLs for food commodities is a dynamic process. In September, 2024, FSSAI has issued a comprehensive (revised and new inclusion) draft notification for the MRLs of Pesticides for food commodities.

FSSAI formulates the country specific standards of food articles on the basis of risk assessment and scientific advice provided by the Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee constituted under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. These standards are harmonized with internationally accepted Codex standards.

FSSAI has also come up with Risk Based Inspection System (RBIS), wherein the Food Businesses dealing in 9 High Risk Food categories (specified under the RBIS) are mandatorily required to undergo annual inspections. Further, a minimum sampling target of 25 samples per Food Safety Officer per month, has been fixed to prioritize enforcement activities

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