

टी बोर्ड भारत

(वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय के अधीन, भारत सरकार)

१४, बी.टी.एम. सरानी (ब्रैबोर्न रोड)

कोलकाता, पश्चिम बंगाल - 700 001

ई-मेल: teaboardholic@gmail.com



TEA BOARD INDIA

(Under Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India)

14, B.T.M. Sarani (Brabourne Road)

Kolkata, West Bengal - 700 001

E-mail: teaboardholic@gmail.com

File No Tea Council/LC/2014/P-I/7357

Dated: 10 /02/2026

DIRECTIVE NO: 01 /2026

Whereas, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-sections (3) and (5) of section of 30 of the Tea Act, 1953 (29 of 1953) the Central Government has notified the Tea (Distribution and Export) Control Order, 2005 (herein after called as the 'said order') to exercise control over export, import and distribution of imported tea.

And whereas, by invoking powers bestowed upon the Board under various paragraphs of the said order, Tea Council of North and South India were constituted vide notification dated 15.10.2012 to assist and advice the Board as per the terms of references one of which is to monitor tea and tea waste imported into India and exported thereafter.

And whereas, vide notification dated 31.01.2025, both the Tea Councils of South and North India were merged and reconstituted as Tea Council Committee of India inter-alia with the objective to monitor the quantity and quality of imported and exported tea.

And whereas, vide notification dated 23.05.2013, online mandatory checking mechanism for export and import of tea was started under which tea samples were drawn and tested by the Board and 'Clearance Certificates' were issued online to each of the applicant.

And whereas, due to operational reasons, drawing and testing of samples were discontinued vide notification dated 31.07.2018. However, Clearance Certificates were continued to be issued online to the applicants which was reiterated vide notification dated 22.12.2021.

And whereas, the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce in its 194th report dated 12.08.2025, at para 3.53 has recommended that with increasing imports and risks of adulteration, stricter monitoring and transparency are essential. The Committee recommends that the Tea Board should enforce mandatory labelling and source declarations for all re-exported or blended teas. Customs-linked surveillance at ports and regular market audits and sample testing at retail points will help safeguard the reputation of Indian-origin tea and maintain consumer trust.

And whereas, the Tea Council Committee in its meeting dated 06.03.2025 and 11.06.2025 has highlighted the issue of restarting the testing mechanism which will ensure teas coming into India are of quality equivalent to the standard prevalent in India.

Therefore, in exercise of the power under paragraph 34 of the said Tea (Distribution and Export) Control Order, 2005, it is hereby directed that, with effect from 1st May, 2026, all import consignments of tea shall be mandatorily tested, in order to ensure quality, in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) enclosed herewith. Any changes, if any, in the said SOP shall be published/circulated/uploaded from time to time on the website of the Board, i.e., www.teaboard.gov.in, under the heading "**Policy and Legislation**".


(C.Murugan)

Licensing Authority & Deputy Chairman Tea Board

Attached: SOP

To

All Licensees issued under Tea (Distribution and Export) Control Order, 2005
- for information and strict compliance

Copy to:

1	All concerned Tea Exporters Associations	For information and necessary action with request to circulate amongst their members and uploading in their respective website.
2	All concerned Tea Producers/ Manufactures / Buyers Associations	For information and necessary action with request to circulate amongst their members and uploading in their respective website
3	Executive Director, Tea Board Guwahati and Tea Board Coonoor	For information and necessary action
4	Controller of Licensing	For information and necessary action
5	DDTD. Siliguri	For information and necessary action

Standard Operating Procedure to be followed for importing tea into India

For importing tea into India, the importer licensed with Tea Board with valid license number under Tea (Distribution & Export) Control Order, 2005 (TDECO) shall follow the below guidelines;

1. Submission of information of import in the Tea Council Portal (<https://teacouncil.teaauction.gov.in>), viz. tentative date of arrival of shipment, warehouse details for storing of such imported teas, etc. along with number of containers and proforma invoice with bifurcation of Tea Cost, Freight & Insurance.
2. The importer shall pay an application fee of Rs. 11,120/- plus GST per sample through the Tea Council portal at the time of applying for the provisional import clearance certificate.
3. At the time of applying, the importer shall have to upload the picture of the Packet through which the imported tea will be re-exported
4. The importer shall be issued with the provisional import clearance certificate by Tea Board through the Tea Council portal.
5. Upon arrival of the import consignment, Tea Board Official, at the concerned port area, within 24 hours, shall draw two sets of samples from any container out of a batch of five containers. The container for drawing the sample will be selected randomly by Tea Board Official.
6. Samples shall be drawn as per following procedure:
 - a) Size of the sample- 500 grams in weight per set.
 - b) The drawn samples shall be collected in clean, dry and odour free aluminium foils (food grade) of appropriate size and should be properly sealed with tamper proof materials like brown tape, etc. or heat sealed.
 - c) The sealed aluminium foils should be clearly labelled with a unique sample code and type of tea and must bear the signature of the collecting official. It is to be ensured that no identifying details of the tea owner are mentioned on the sample packets, in order to maintain anonymity during analysis.
 - d) The bag from which the sample has been drawn shall then be properly re-sealed with brown adhesive tape or any other tamper proof material to avoid any tampering. It shall also be appropriately labelled and signed by the collecting official.
 - e) No sample shall be drawn from a consignment if Customs/FSSAI has already drawn a sample from the same consignment. In such cases, samples may be drawn from another consignment.

7. One sample shall be dispatched on the same day to the nearest NABL accredited laboratories for Tea Board under Integrated Assessment Scheme for testing of FSSAI parameters. The reserve sample shall remain in the custody of the Tea Board.
8. Laboratory selection shall be system-generated. The laboratory shall acknowledge the receipt of the sample after the receipt through the system immediately.
9. After drawing the sample, the importer may shift the teas to their designated warehouse only.
10. The importer shall store the said teas, from the container from which the samples were drawn, separately in the warehouse. None of the imported teas shall be used for re-export or domestic sale until issuance of the final clearance certificate by Tea Board.
11. The concerned laboratory shall upload the test report within 14 days from date of receipt of sample.
12. The laboratory will upload the test results parameter wise in the system, and the system will also provide a provision to indicate Pass or Fail by the concerned Laboratory.
13. The samples that have passed shall be issued with the final clearance certificate by Tea Board through the Tea Council portal. The failed sample shall not be issued the final clearance certificate under any circumstances. An alert message shall be sent to the importer in case the sample fails.
14. In case the importer desires to get the reserve, sample tested: -
 - a) the importer shall submit a request in the system to send the sample to any other NABL-accredited laboratory for analysis within 48 hours of receiving the alert message regarding the sample failure.
 - b) The portal shall select the Laboratory for testing the reserve sample.
 - c) Upon receipt of the alert message for testing the reserve sample, the Inspecting Official shall send the reserve sample in their custody to any other nearest NABL accredited laboratories for Tea Board under Integrated Assessment Scheme for testing of FSSAI parameters of tea, within next 24 hours, to check compliance with all applicable FSSAI requirements.
 - d) The importer has to make the payment of Rs.15000/- plus GST per sample for testing the reserve sample.
 - e) The concerned laboratory shall upload the test report within 14 days from date of receipt of sample

15. In the event, no request for testing reserve sample or the reserve sample also fails, action shall be initiated for disposal of the failed tea as tea waste as per the provisions of Tea (Waste) Control Order, 1959.
16. Teas imported for export have to be exported within six months from date of import into the country.
17. Export of imported tea shall achieve 50% Value addition. Value addition for this purpose shall be $V. A = 100X(A-B)$
where V.A stands for value addition, A stands for unit FOB price of tea exported and B stands for Unit CIF price of imported tea.
18. All export consignments containing Indian teas blended with imported teas shall clearly declare this fact on the final packing material as well as on all accompanying documents, including the Phytosanitary Certificate, Health Certificate, Certificate of Origin, and any other relevant documents. Such consignments shall be subject to inspection by Tea Board India.
