

FAQ on Plant Protection Code:

1. What is Plant Protection Code (PPC)?

Plant Protection Code' is a comprehensive guideline for safe usage of Plant Protection Formulations (PPFs) in the tea plantations in India. Tea Board introduced the Plant Protection Code to bring in a regime of sustainable plant protection practices. PPC is a dynamic policy document and currently its 11th version is available.

2. What is the aim of PPC?

PPC aims to achieve sustainability through GAP including IPM, promotion of alternative control strategies (Biological control etc) to gradually reduce the dependence on chemicals. PPC focuses on responsible chemical management.

3. Why do we need PPC?

In order to manage the pests and disease problem of tea, proper and judicious usage of pesticides are essential and important. Hence, Plant Protection Code (PPC) has been developed for the judicious use of pesticides following scientific guidelines to help the industry. This is also required for assuring safety and building confidence among the buyers and importers of Indian Tea.

4. How PPC is encouraging tea planters?

PPC encourages tea growers to critically review their use of PPFs, reduce the use of PPFs where possible and over time, apply the PPFs in the safest way possible.

5. How do the PPFs selected in PPC?

The Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee (CIB&RC), Government of India, constantly review the usage of pesticides in India on various crops and up-date information with the help of pesticide industry. CIB&RC issues label claim for usage of pesticides for various crops. PPC allows only those PPFs which are approved for use in tea by CIB&RC and their MRLs are fixed by FSSAI.

6. What are the approved Plant Protection Formulations (PPFs) for use in Tea plantations currently in PPC ver. 11.0?

Currently, there are 45 formulations of various categories of PPFs including one bio-pesticide having label claim from CIB&RC for use in tea as per PPC ver 11.0. This list does not contain extremely and highly hazardous chemicals classified under World Health Organization (WHO) 1a & 1b and are fully aligned with the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

7. How PPC is updated?

An expert technical group has been constituted to review and update this code from time to time.

8. What are the common problems associated with the overuse of chemical pesticides? Overuse of chemical pesticides can cause secondary pest outbreak together with problems of pesticide residue in made tea. Possibility of development of insect-pest resistance against these insecticides cannot be altogether ignored. In addition to residue problem, other factors such as tainting of tea, toxic hazards to operators and natural enemies of insect-pests can also cause great disturbance.

9. How are the Tea Research Institutes involved in this matter ? The tea research institutes have been advised by Tea Board to monitor the PPFs used in tea plantations and generate residue and bio-efficacy data that has been submitted to both national and international regulatory bodies, such as CIB&RC, FSSAI, Codex, JMPR, FAO IGG, on a continuous basis.

10. What is the general policy concerning food safety aspects in tea ?

Tea Board India along with Tea Research Institutes and Indian tea industry have been addressing the issue of usage of plant protection formulations (PPFs) in order to control the pests and disease problem of Indian Tea Industry in line with the requirements of both National (FSSAI) and International regulatory bodies (Codex, EU, Japan, USA etc.). Planters are required to test their end product as per standards laid down by FSSAI for tea regularly. Besides, Tea Board undertakes random analysis of tea samples for both North Indian and South Indian teas for export of tea as well as teas sold in the domestic market. Various food safety and quality awareness workshops are also being organized on regular basis to ensure that the food safety and quality parameters are being maintained strictly. Tea Research Institutes in India are generating scientific data on pesticide residue and conducting bio-efficacy studies on a continuous basis. The scientific information is being submitted to the national regulatory bodies (CIB&RC, Ministry of Agriculture and FSSAI, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India) which helps in the fixation of MRLs in respect of different pesticides used in tea.

11. Why should the public continue to trust Indian grown tea? India has some of the most stringent regulations in the world to ensure the safety and protection of consumers. Teas complying with the prescribed standards are safe to consume. Tea Board of India has been working closely with the tea industry to deliver even higher standards and is engaged in several joint initiatives to continuously augment the standards regulating Indian teas. This is an ongoing commitment of all concerned

and we welcome the contributions of all stakeholders in achieving this goal.

12. What is the impact of PPC on export?

The proper use of Plant Protection Code is helping the industry to manage the pests and disease problem, pesticide residue problem and maintain the food safety and quality related issues. This in turn will ensure the offering of quality produce for domestic consumption of tea as well export of tea for the international market.

13. Names and locations of Research Institutes of Tea Board: Tea Board of India has only one research Institute in the country exclusively for Darjeeling tea industry. Recently, it has come up with a laboratory at Siliguri for testing of tea samples.

- i. **Darjeeling Tea Research and Development Centre (DTR&DC)** Kurseong, West Bengal and
- ii. **Quality Control Laboratory (QCL)**, Tea Park, Siliguri, West Bengal

Apart from the above, Tea Board also funds two private cooperative research institutes for tea research in the country

- i. **Tocklai Tea Research Institute** (Tea Research Association), Jorhat, Assam
- ii. **United Planters' Association of South India (UPASI)- Tea Research Foundation**, Valparai, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu