

EDITORIAL

This SECOND issue of the International Journal of Tea Science has been inordinately delayed as your Resident Editor suffered medical incapacitation for almost four months. This adversity was compounded by several changes in the administrative set up of the collaborating organization. However, these events have exposed the need of institutionalizing the Project so that during such unforeseen circumstances, support can be forthcoming from other commodity specialists. One individual, howsoever resourceful, suffers severe limitations in sustaining a publication on a long term basis.

The FEED-BACK from the readers of the first issue – both in industry & amongst scientists, was very encouraging. Quality and content of the Journal were found to be comparable to the international standards. Several queries have been received on the topical subject of industrial uses of tea extract. Sulphur review has focused on the need to apply sulphur in many situations where it was not known to be deficient. Even the information on the oldest nutrient nitrogen brought home the variations in N-fertilization in different tea growing regions.

The RATIONALE of this second issue is the continuation of the laid down policies of the inaugural issue. The movement towards achieving the over-riding objective of bringing modern information technology to this ancient agro-industry has begun well. Tea extract is a case in point. This highly value-added product of new technology promises great potential both in the short term as well as in the long term. Over a short period of time, the manufacture of this new line of product could enhance revenues in the current situation of globally depressed tea market. Moreover, this new technology moves the goal posts of a single-use commodity market as a beverage. In the long run, it opens new vistas to the consumption of very large volumes of leaf tea as raw material for the manufacture of multi-use tea extract, as well as the other value added products for industrial and pharmaceutical purposes. If widely adopted by the tea industry, this (product) information would have the potential of stabilizing tea prices and could open up a new market economy. Perhaps in the same futuristic category would fall the conceptual paper on Total Quality Management, appearing in this issue.

The CONTENTS of this issue comprise the following:

1. PEER-REVIEWED Publications: three papers are included, viz.
 - (a) Original research paper on roasting temperature during manufacture of Oolong tea on its flavor and quality.
 - (b) Conceptual paper on TQM -- Total Quality Management during manufacture of tea, using HACCP approach. In this age of WTO regime, competition for quality products is very fierce and only the best survive in the global market. A long term objective would be for the tea industry to develop and adopt norms for zero-defect manufacture of quality tea.
 - (c) Bibliographic compilation of the abstracts of the latest publications in the fast moving area of *Camellia* biotechnology opens a window to those engaged in research in tea biotechnology. In fact this area of scientific endeavor is developing so fast that the manuscript had to be updated twice during editing itself and will need further updating by the time it reaches the readers.

2. STATISTICAL data from Kenya, received courtesy Tea Board of Kenya, and Centerline Tea Brokers, were analyzed, which revealed challenges for the scientists and the tea industry.
 - (a) To sustain the enormous growth in Kenya's tea exports, the tea scientists face the twin challenges on the front of small-holder as well as large estate sector.
 - i. Building upon the strength of quality tea produced by the Kenyan small-holder growers, by increasing their productivity, within the constraint of Low Input Agriculture practiced by them.
 - ii. Upgrading the product quality of estate sector's high yields. The indifferent quality may be related to the practices followed by tea-pluckers, who must be trained for improvement of plucked leaf quality through time and motion studies of plucking operations.
 - (b) Determining the underlying cause of variation in crop distribution, despite the uniform day-length and temperatures throughout the year in equatorial Kenya. Maybe this endogenous rhythm of crop variations is controlled by some genetic factor/s like the recently discovered "dormancy gene." This investigation is proposed to understand the mechanism of interaction between tea genome and the uniform Kenyan environment, which might help identify and overcome a constraint in crop productivity, which is still unknown to the tea scientists.
 - (c) Product diversification as the new tool for better realization. In the past, increment of export earnings were achieved by diversification of export destination from the dominant U.K. market (which received 2/3rd of the total exports in the 1980s) to the newly emerging markets. Now Pakistan and Egypt together account for almost half (45%) of the earnings as compared to only a quarter by export to the British market.
3. SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACTS: This issue brings to its readers 250 classified scientific abstracts, downloaded from the CD ROMs and Internet. To collect, collate and disseminate the global information on tea science is a significant mandate for the Society (ISTS) and for this Journal. Preponderance of tea research papers in Chinese language with 45%, followed by 30% in English and 10% each in Japanese, and Russian, poses a serious handicap in consolidating tea information across the language barrier. To our knowledge, no abstracting service is comprehensively reporting tea science research publications. Even CABI tea abstracts are scattered over 10 different abstracting journals, which makes it very difficult for the readers to access all the tea information. Advice of our readers to overcome this problem would be welcome.
4. PUBLIC SUPPORT has been very heartening indeed with a large number of subscribers joining the International Society of Tea Science from all strata -- institutional, corporate, working scientists, practicing professionals, consultants, students and even retired tea professionals. One founder member was so enthusiastic that he paid two years' subscription in one go which speaks volumes for his faith. However, a view is to introduce life-membership to individuals at concessional rates, which will avoid the problem of annual renewal. The Help of the Director INSDOC for continuing support to this project, is gratefully

acknowledged. We appreciate the hard work by the Project Coordinator Mrs. Aruna Karanjai despite several constraints, which has made it possible to bring out this second issue of the Journal in the present form

It is REASSURING that the manuscripts for the next issue are already in the pipeline and it should be published without delay.

New Delhi
August , 2002

(N.K. Jain)
Resident Editor