

EDITORIAL

Through the unique forum of *International Journal of Tea Science (IJTS)*, we are pleased to bring out the 4th issue of Volume 8 for the year 2012, albeit a bit late, before our honoured readership. On behalf of the Editorial Board of *IJTS*, allow me to encourage and invite authors and other key contributors to submit value-added research papers and other articles for disseminating crucial information pertaining to Tea Science. The current issue brings out some important research papers, reviews and on-site approaches, which should help scientists, stakeholders in the tea industry and associated policy makers.

Under the section “RESEARCH PAPERS”, Singha and co-authors have reported the potential of some plant extracts for the control of termite pests in tea. The crude extracts of *Ipomea carnea*, *Pavonia glechomifolia* and *Cleome viscosa* can be effectively utilized as safe phytopesticidal products in tea estates as potent tools in integrated termite management, and thereby reducing the load of chemical pesticides from the agroecosystem. Ahmad *et al.* have highlighted the antifungal activities of extracts of some medicinal plants against two common fungal pathogens of tea, namely *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* (die-back) and *Pestalotia theae* (grey blight). Their field study, carried out in Bangladesh, focuses on Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Bishkatali (*Polygonum barbatum*), Basak (*Adhatoda vasica*), Arjun (*Terminalia arjuna*) and reports that Basak extract exhibits highest antifungal effect on both test organisms.

Considering the vital role played by tea small-holders in the economy of Sri Lanka, Shyamalie and Saini have conducted an in-depth study of socio-economic status of tea small-holders in the hills of Sri Lanka. They have suggested options for livelihood improvement of a representative population with tea cultivation being the only source of income around, and have stressed on the need for inculcating entrepreneurship skills for economic independence together with women empowerment and livelihood security.

The research article authored by Chakraborty *et al.* reports that the sclerotial blight of tea can be controlled biologically by the use of arbuscular mycorrhizal fungus and plant growth promoting rhizobacterium like *B. amyloliquifaciens*. For genetic differentiation and clonal identification of tea clones, study by Mishra-Rawat *et al.* reports work on eight tea clones taken from different agroclimatic zones of India, using molecular tools. They have used RAPD and ISSR markers to detect polymorphism and DNA level changes in various tea clones.

Under the section “RESEARCH REVIEW”, article by Mukhopadhyay brings forth the usefulness of *Trichoderma* – widely used as biofungicide and effective for plant disease management – and the author has suggested considering this biocontrol agent for use in tea cultivation, also citing examples of many other crops in the region, including a sole reference to tea as well.

In “TECHNOLOGY THAT SHAPED THE TEA INDUSTRY” section, Dharmaraj has stressed on mechanization of harvesting in tea – a classic case of Science and Technology interface with Management practices, with emphasis on shifting from selective to non-selective harvesting, monitoring leaf expansion time, and standardization of harvesting interval; all worthy of consideration by the readership of *IJTS*.

Under the section “NEWS & VIEWS”, article by Sharma sheds light on critical natural resources within tea plantations and their optimal utilization. He also suggests effective strategies for revival of a burnt tea field, which is highlighted by Negi who has shared two photographs of a tea field indicating the hazards caused by the forest fire and other constraints, in bringing back the past glory of tea cultivation in the present context of Uttarakhand.

The section “COUNTRY REPORT” presents a summary of the growing Bangladesh Tea Sector from local and global viewpoints; Hossain has attempted a comprehensive account of tea industry in the country, considering physiography, ecosystem, climate, biogeographic details, rainfall and temperature regimes, soil and nutrient status found in various tea zones in Bangladesh. He has also highlighted trends in market growth, the underlying mechanism, value chain in terms of production, consumption and export, and finally concludes on a brief summary note on Objectives, Achievements and further Strategies adopted by Bangladesh Tea Research Institute (BTRI); a must read for tea-enthusiasts, researchers and other stakeholders.

The Editorial Board of *IJTS* thanks authors and contributors to this issue for their efforts in enriching the Tea Science Knowledge Base of the international community; we are appreciative of the contributions made by

D. Singha, B. Singha, B.K. Dutta, I. Ahmad, M.D. Alam, M.S. Islam, H.W. Shyamalie, A.S. Saini, B.N. Chakraborty, U. Chakraborty, U. De, A.P. Chakraborty, J. Mishra-Rawat, S.K. Nandi, A. Prakash, A.N. Mukhopadhyay, N. Dharmaraj, G.C.S. Negi, V.S. Sharma, A.B. Majumdar, B. Bera and M. Hossain. Equally the Editorial Board gratefully acknowledges the expert advice and critical suggestions provided by a number of anonymous reviewers whose remarks have helped the authors to improve their articles. We shall look forward to their continued cooperation in the future also. The *IJTS* Desk Editor, Mr. Puneet S. Sirari, has helped us in bringing this issue to its final shape along with the publishing team at Salasar Imaging Systems; we thank all concerned for their contributions “behind the scene”.

IJTS Vol. 8(4) also contains the usual “TEA SCIENCE ABSTRACTS”; this section will be discontinued in the future (please see the “ANNOUNCEMENT” section in this issue). The consistent help and support from the International Society of Tea Science (ISTS) and Tea Board of India are thankfully acknowledged in taking this journey further; it is hoped that *IJTS* will continue to take important strides and touch new milestones in years ahead, with their guidance.

Happy reading to you all with sips of this wonderful brew called “tea” that enriches us in many different ways with a plethora of flavours and taste!

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Lok Man S. Palni, PhD (Wales), FNA, FNASc, FNAAS