

From the Editorial Office ...

Voluminous literature exists on health effects of “green tea” based chiefly on the work carried out in Japan, China and USA. Contrary to this, not much information is available on health benefits of “black tea” despite the fact that it is produced and consumed on a much larger scale, all over the world. This special issue, originally intended to be on “BLACK TEA & HUMAN HEALTH”, is a continuation of the initiative by the International Society of Tea Science (ISTS) which commenced with Volume 2(1), 2002 of *International Journal of Tea Science (IJTS)*, as a special issue on “Tea and Health”. The Society continued its endeavour by conducting a special session on Tea & Health, with the participation of eminent scientists, at the International Conference, Kolkata (2003). It culminated in the publication of Book-2 of ISTS, a monograph on “*Protective Effects on Human Health*” by CABI (2006). But, most of the work reported therein was on health effects of green tea. The Society, therefore, planned to publish a special issue of *IJTS* on “Black Tea & Human Health” as a fore-runner to Book-3, to remedy the situation by providing as much literature as possible, on the subject.

The objective is not to compile information just on the consumption of “black tea” as a beverage and its effect on human health; it is also to focus attention on the versatile effects of tea polyphenols, their fractions and other active bio-molecules extracted from black tea on various human ailments. Thereby, directing the attention of tea producers to the immense scope of generating handsome margins from extracting and marketing bio-active molecules from black tea. However, the quantum and quality of research in this direction seem to be meager as evidenced by the response received by the Editorial Board. Perforce, articles on “green tea” too are included in this issue of *IJTS* and it is hence rechristened, “TEA & HUMAN HEALTH”.

The Editorial Board and the special issue have been fortunate in finding an energetic, able and well-informed Guest Editor in Dr. Gautam Banerjee, UNILEVER – R&D, Bengaluru, for this special issue. I do not want to talk about the contents of the issue here and steal his thunder! The Guest Editorial offers his expert comments on the contents of this special issue.

In fine, statement of a fact deserves space here: literature generated on tea chemicals – from either “green tea” or “black tea” – that influence human health should not be just bound in volumes of journals and books that end up decorating library shelves! The scientific information on the subject should be discussed and disseminated in open forums such as symposia and conferences with the participation of the concerned scientists, drug formulators, medical researchers, the practitioners and consumers for it to be of any use and service to the humanity.

Wishing informative reading ...

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