

From the Editorial Office...

The International Society Of Tea Science (ISTS) is happy to announce the launching of an electronic version of its journal, International Journal Of Tea Science (IJTS), beginning with volume 10 (2014). The ISTS has licensed a commercial publishing house, M/S Informatics Private Ltd. (IPL), for publication of the International Journal of Tea Science (IJTS) in print as well as electronic media; IPL extends pre- and post- publication services and online editing. IPL is a large group, publishing about 205 journals, of which 65 are published both in electronic and print media. Hence, the IJTS will have a wider exposure to the scientific world, expectedly attracting a larger number of quality research articles and a wider readership. The Current subscribers of ISTS will get the benefit of free electronic version of IJTS in addition to the usual free print copy for two years (Vol. 10 and Vol. 11) without additional charges.

The ISTS members, perhaps, are aware that following a hiatus of over three years, the Society revived the Journal –in Nov 22, 2011 in collaboration with the Tea Board of India, accepting latter's helping hand extended graciously and the funds to meet the full expenses for the publication of volume eight. Volumes eight and nine were brought out, successfully, to the satisfaction of all concerned. At this juncture, the Tea Board insisted that ISTS sign a revised MOU that contained some unacceptable conditions that interfere with the autonomy of the Editorial Board of IJTS and the Executive Committee of the ISTS. The ISTS had hardly any alternative except to dissociate itself from publication of IJTS jointly with the Tea Board and decided to plough a lone furrow. The Journal will not be a joint publication with the Tea Board, any more; ISTS will be the sole publisher, despite its meager resources.

It has been decided to release the four issues of the Volume 10, 2014 in pairs of two in view of paucity of quality articles. New rates of subscription are announced elsewhere in this issue. Subscribers to e-journal will have an additional benefit of accessing, online, all old issues of the IJTS from the time of its inception in the year 2000. Tea science abstracts will also be available online to the e-journal subscribers, on IPL platform and not from CABI online service.

Now, a brief on the articles in this issue:

- Tea clones in Sri Lanka have all along been thought to be derivatives of seedling populations of 'Cambod type'/'Southern form' (*Camellia assamica ssp. lasyocalyx* (Planch.) Wight). However, detailed biochemical studies of over 500 clones by Kottawa-Arachchi *et al.* showed that tea germplasm in Sri Lanka has a wider diversity.
- Treatment of pre-eclampsia – a toxic condition occurring in late pregnancy characterized by high blood pressure, excessive weight gain, proteins in urine, oedema and visual disturbances – with conventional medicines is beset with serious maternal and foetal side effects. *In vitro* studies by Padmini Ekambaram and Karunagoda demonstrate the apoptosis mediated protein ASK-1 with modulating oxidant-antioxidant status during pre-eclampsia using tea-mint infusion; thus emerges an alternative remedial option for treating this condition, using herbal infusion, with no side effects.
- Bore *et al.* indicated that leaf water potential, relative water content and chlorophyll content may be used as indicators for water stress in composite tea plants. They surmised that moisture level below 30 per cent V/V would lead to moisture stress in grafted plants.

- Micro-nutrient levels varied with the location of tea cultivation in a study carried out by *Omwoyo et al.* Nitrogen dosage had varied influence on different micro-nutrients while plucking intervals had no effect on them.
- Verma and Swati A. Pund carried out an exhaustive review on the importance of potassium, its dose, ratios with nitrogen and its interaction with phosphorus and magnesium in Tea in south India; they brought out the imperative need to optimize potassium nutrition.
- It is followed by another short review by Athanasios Psihogios on 'green tea' constituents and their role in reducing the risk of cancer.
- Mugdha Ambadkar *et al.* studied theanine precursors, ethylamine and aniline for their synergism in tea callus. They noticed synergy between them at 30-day interval, with maximum accumulation of theanine in callus. Theanine content in calli varied inversely with polyphenol content over 60-day cycle.

A scan of the articles that are being received by IJTS and a general survey of recent literature on tea science reveal a lack of progressive investigations that are innovative leading to emergence of worthwhile production technology. Despite the fact that millions of dollars are ploughed in and active research is undertaken at several premier Tea Research Institutes and other research centers in the world, not many articles of quality with vision to break new paths are received by the IJTS. Hardly any paper is received from any tea research institute, but for the lone exception of Kenya. Consequently, persistent, gaping lacunae in knowledge in important areas with significant impact on productivity, economy of production, quality addition and diversification abound. To cite only a few: lack of information on absorption and pathways of major, secondary and micro nutrients, availability of nutrients from applied fertilizers in terms of both time-span required from application and per cent nutrient availability in different soils, optimal ratios between different nutrients and between them and crop, optimal ratios between wood, leaf and crop, economization of energy consumption in manufacture and so on. One can go on *ad infinitum*!

The major victim of such a scenario in scientific knowledge is the tea industry.

It is high time that stake holders and policy makers sit up and take stock of the situation prevailing in tea science without further loss of time.

Perhaps, many tea scientists are not aware that the IJTS has been awarded an 'Impact Factor' of 2.67 by the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS). The 'Factor' should soon improve with quality papers coming in good numbers in view of the expected wider exposure of the Journal to tea scientists through our electronic version that is to be facilitated by M/S IPL.

The effort and time spared by subject specialists in evaluating the articles appearing in this volume and offering their expert comments are highly appreciated and acknowledged with gratitude.

V. S. Sharma
Editor-in-Chief