ROAD TO CEYLON TEA: A CASE STUDY ON GREEN LEAF SUPPLY CHAIN

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Quality of green leaf which supply to the bought leaf collecting factory important to maintain quality of end product. Present study aimed to explore the tea green supply chain.  The research objectives were, to identify the nature and structure of green leaf supply chain, to find out the relationship between quality of green leaf on quality of black tea and to identify the good practices which lead to maintain the quality of green leaf supply chain. Sample composed of randomly selected 100 tea green leaf producers (growers), 50 collectors and 5 bought leaf collecting factories. Data collection tools were in depth interviews, focus group discussions and filed survey. Descriptive analysis was used to analysis the firm-graphic information of the tea export firms and demo-graphic information of the supply chain actors. Value chain mapping and analysis were principal tools to investigate the structure of green leaf supply chain, relationships, flows and income distribution. Tea growers, bought leaf collectors (logistic suppliers), vendors, and bought leaf collecting factories are main actors of the supply chain. Two main factors directly affected on quality of green leaves. Weather condition, especially rainfall, temperate, mist and fog. Physical factors were plucking interval, method of plucking, time of plucking, type of collecting bag, method of transport, time for transport, etc. Good practices which lead to maintain the quality of green leaf supply chain were, conduct awareness program to both collectors and producers to aware about the green leaf supply chain and its quality, bought leaf collecting factories can pay incentives for collectors to motivate them to maintain quality of green leaf, Bought leaf collecting factories can initiate strategic plan to maintain green leaf quality.

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