**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 aimed to explore the tea green supply chain and the 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 green leaf supply chain. Sample composed of randomly selected 100 tea green leaf producers (growers), 50 collectors and 5 bought leaf collecting factories. 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. In the sample, 87% of respondents supply their green leaf to the factory through collectors and 13% of respondents supply their green leaf directly to the bought leaf collecting factories. In the sample, 80% of respondents use harvesting tools, knife. Selective hand picking ensures best quality green leaves but harvesting tools resulted both tender and mature leaves and damage the tea bush. In the sample, plucking interval of the majority,56% of the growers were maintain between 10-15 days.

In the sample 82% of collectors take more than 6 hours to bring green from cultivating area to bought leaf collecting factory. Recommended volume for collecting bag was less than 25Kg but majority (60%) of the collectors’ pack more than 30Kgs. Physical, chemical and biological contaminants significantly affected on quality of green leaf. Poor roads and vehicles were another significant quality deterioration factor. Level of awareness on safety and quality management along the green leaf supply chain was poor.

*Key Words; Green leaf, Supply chain, tea, quality*