

**ACCESS AND USE OF INFORMATION BY TEA SMALL HOLDERS IN  
UDUNUWARA DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT AREA**

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Contribution of the tea sector accounted for 8.8% and nearly 1% of the agricultural sector and the Gross Domestic Production, respectively in 2012. Sri Lanka's tea sector consists of the estate sector and the smallholdings sector. Production of tea smallholdings sector and estate sector in 2012 accounted for 72% and 28%, respectively of the total tea production. Although smallholdings sector dominated the tea production the average productivity of made tea is 300 to 400 kg/ha/year, compared to the targeted level of 700 kg/ha/year. This is mainly due to inefficiency in transferring technical knowledge to farmers. Access to technical information is a must in increasing yield but little empirical work has been done to identify the sources of information and to assess the impact of information on yield. This study was carried out to determine access and use of information by tea small holders in Udunuara Divisional Secretariat area in Kandy District, Sri Lanka. A combination of multistage random sampling was used to get 100 respondents. Data collected were analyzed with a Probit Model using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20. Results showed that, a majority (53%) of tea small holders have received information from tea inspectors while 25% and 15% from the fellow farmers and the tea factories, respectively. Study further found that, off-farm income, household size, marital status of the farmer, farming experience and land extent have influenced significantly on the access to information. The mean leaf tea yield of the farmers with access to information was high at 612 kg/ha/month, compared to that of the non-participants whose mean yield was 403 kg/ha/month. The study concludes that information plays a key role in determining the tea yield and emphasizes the need of an appropriate information source to reach tea small holders.

**Keywords:** Information access, Tea small holders, Udunuwara divisional secretariat area