

**SUPPLY CHAIN AND ADOPTION OF NEWLY
IMPROVED TEA CULTIVARS IN TEA SMALL
HOLDING SECTOR IN UVA REGION**

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ABSTRACT

Tea small holding sector plays a pivotal role in the economy of the country. Tea small holders in Uva region face some challenges caused by biotic and abiotic stresses in tea growing as the consequences of them. Therefore these issues lead the low productivity and poor quality tea. Adoption of newly improved cultivars in tea sector is vital investment to enhance the productivity and to sustain the yield stability under different environmental stress conditions. The objectives of this research are to study supply chain of improved tea cultivars in tea small holding sector in Uva region, to assess the small holders' awareness knowledge level and adoption towards improved tea cultivars, and to identify the factors affecting on adoption decision of newly improved tea cultivars by tea growers in Uva region. The research was carried out in Uva region tea small holdings areas of Haliella, Bandarawela and Welimada divisions. The Snowballing sampling technique was applied to find out the key informants that were all organizations involved in newly improved tea cultivar distribution among small tea holders. Two hundred tea small holders and thirty commercial tea nursery holders were selected from 16 Tea Inspectors ranges of these divisions commercial tea nursery holders were adopt towards on newly improved tea cultivation by using cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Probit model was used to identify the factors affecting adoption decision of newly improved tea cultivars by tea growers. The improved tea cultivars supply chain was composed of Plant Breeders, Mother Bush Coordinators, Mother Bush Managers, Commercial Tea Nursery Holders and Tea Small Holders. Supply chain actors are responsible for transmission of materials, information and services. The awareness and knowledge levels of the tea small holders and commercial tea nursery holders on newly improved tea cultivars are not in highly satisfactory level. It was found that majority of tea small holders are poor or nil adoption of cultivation of newly improved tea cultivars. Tea small holders education, awareness and knowledge level, extension service contact, experienced with drought, membership of agricultural association, field affected by pest and deceases are the factors affecting to increase the adoption decision of newly improved tea cultivars by tea small holders. The factor of constraints to access of newly improved planting materials influences to discourage the adoption decision of newly improved tea cultivars by tea small holders.

Key words: Newly improved tea cultivars, supply chain, awareness, knowledge, adoption decision, quality and productivity of made tea