

**ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF ADAPTION OF
RECOMMENDED PRACTICES IN
COMMERCIAL TEA NURSERIES**

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ABSTRACT

Nursery management is a most important operation for successful tea cultivation in the field. This study attempted to investigate the level of adaption and knowledge of Tea Research Institute (TRI) recommendations on commercial tea nurseries among tea smallholders in Galle district, Identify whether there is a relationship between adaptations of recommendations with nursery registration in Tea Small Holding Development Authority (TSHDA) and identify the constraints of nursery owners for adapting TRI recommendations on commercial tea nurseries.

The study was conducted in the Galle district in 2012 among randomly selected 20 tea nursery holders who have registered their tea nursery in TSHDA and 60 unregistered tea nursery holders. The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire and by nursery observations.

The results revealed that knowledge level and adoption level of unregistered nursery owners were medium among the respondents. However registered nursery owners had high knowledge level and medium adoption level. According to the experts view the standard size of the nursery bag, the length of the nursery period, disbudding and thumb nailing are scored as the most important nursery operations. When consider the standard size of the bag and length of the nursery period the 15% of the registered nursery owners are in full adoption category 25% partial adoption category, 35% less adoption category and 25% nil adoption category. However 25% and 5% registered nursery owners practiced disbudding and thumb nailing respectively. Interestingly all unregistered nursery owners in nil adoption category when consider the standard size of the bag and length of the nursery period. However no any unregistered nursery owners adopt disbudding and thumb nailing.

Education level, cost of production, income from the nursery, government employment and registration of the nursery in TSHDA exhibited significant and positive relationship with adoption of recommended practices. The most important constraint experienced by both registered and unregistered farmers is soil collection.

Key Words: Adoption Level, Knowledge Level, Registered Tea Nursery Owners, Unregistered Tea Nursery Owners, Tea Small Holding Development Authority