

**EVALUATION OF TEA SMALLHOLDERS CURRENTLY
INVOLVED IN ORGANIC TEA FARMING IN BADULLA
DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

Like any other sector, application of agricultural knowledge and correct practices application in organic tea are vitally important to enhance the productivity and overall performance in organic tea industry. The degree of adoption of recommended practices is crucial factor in organic tea small holding sector. In view of this; a study was conducted in Badulla district in 2016 to assess the level^o adoption ~~of~~ towards recommended practice and ~~as~~ to identify the major problem faced by organic tea cultivators. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire and direct interviews. Awareness and adoption levels were measured under six categories such as maintaining buffer zones, obtaining of organic certificates, solid organic fertilizer application, liquid organic fertilizer application, preparation of vermicompost and conversion period. Descriptive statistical analysis method was used to determine the status of problems faced by the organic tea small holders while multiple linear regression method was used to find out the effect of independent variables (gender, age of the farmer, time duration of organic tea cultivation, land extent, location of the farm, availability of input supply and infrastructure facilities in the village) on the level of adoption of recommended organic agricultural practices. Results revealed that time period of the cultivation and infrastructure facilities in the village had significant positive effect on the adoption of recommended correct organic field practices while age of the farmer and land extent had significantly negative effect. Major problems faced by small scale organic tea farmers are inadequate support from government, nullity of organic subsidies and higher initial investment in organic tea cultivation.

Keywords: Adoption, Organic tea, Problems in Organic Tea Farming, Tea Small Holders