

Sri Lanka Tea Board  
Tea Commissioner's Division

To all Registered Tea Manufacturers

Directions given under Section 8(2) of the Tea Control Act No. 51 of 1957 as amended, to preserve the naturalness of made tea.

1. Section 8(2) of the Tea Control Act No. 51 of 1957 as amended requires that the manner of operation (the tea manufacturing process) of a tea factory should be conducive to the manufacture of made tea of good quality. Tea is a natural drink derived from the tea plant (*Camellia sinensis*). Accordingly, the manner of operation of a tea factory should guarantee the preservation of the naturalness of made tea.
2. The naturalness of made tea will be harmed if attempts are made to enhance the blackness of tea by artificial means.
3. Artificial means of enhancing the blackness of tea result in a product containing foreign substances harmful to human health and depleted of its natural substances which destroys the naturalness of tea and hence, its quality from the point of view of its final customer. It can bring about a total rejection of Sri Lankan tea from the international market with serious repercussions on the economy of Sri Lanka. Another serious repercussion would be the encouragement of the supply of sub standard leaf.
4. Accordingly, in order to preserve the naturalness of made tea, by virtue of the powers vested in me by Section 8(2) of the Tea Control Act No. 51 of 1957 as amended, you are hereby directed to:
  - i. Refrain from making any attempts to artificially blacken tea.
  - ii. Refrain from storing any substance that could be used to artificially blacken tea within the tea factory or its premises. These substances include inter alia, substances that are purported to be natural, such as commercially available enzymes.
5. Within the meaning of section 8(2) of the Tea Control Act No. 51 of 1957 as amended, blackening tea by artificial means shall be considered as making the manner of operation of a tea factory to a standard non-conducive to manufacture made tea of good quality. Accordingly, steps shall be taken to suspend or cancel the registration of such tea factory.

Non-compliance with the above directions shall be considered as an offence under section 39 of the aforesaid act. Accordingly, by the powers vested in me by Section 55 (3) of the aforesaid act, I have empowered officers authorized by me to enter any tea factory without prior notice or break into any tea factory at any time of the day where there is reasonable grounds to believe that this offence is being committed.

By the powers vested in me by Section 55(2) of the aforesaid act, I have empowered officers authorized by me to demand any record and any declaration (either verbal or written) and make copies of any entries in such records or declarations, obtain photographs and samples of substances found in violation of the aforesaid directions, as evidence. By the powers vested in me by section 14(a) of the Tea (Tax and Control) of Exports Act No. 16 of 1959 as amended the officers authorized by me shall be empowered to remove samples of tea for testing the quality.

registered tea manufacturer who makes default in complying with aforesaid directions shall be guilty of making the manner of operation the factory non conducive to manufacture made tea of good quality and by the powers vested in me by section 8(2) of the aforesaid act, the registration of such factory may be suspended or cancelled.

Under section 39 of the aforesaid act, every person who makes default in complying with the aforesaid directions shall be guilty of an offence.

10. Under section 40 of the aforesaid act, every person who resists or obstructs my authorized officers in the performance or exercise of their legitimate duties shall be guilty of an offence.
11. Under section 45 of the aforesaid act, every person who is guilty of an offence shall be prosecuted and on conviction after summary trial before a magistrate be liable to a fine of Rs. 50,000/- or to a term of imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period of one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.
12. These directions have been given on the 01<sup>st</sup> of November 2005, at the Sri Lanka Tea Board in Colombo.

  
Nimal Udugampola  
Tea Commissioner

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copies:

- (01) Secretary, Ministry of Plantation Industries.
- (02) Chairman/ Director General, Sri Lanka Tea Board.
- (03) Chairman, JEDB/SLSPC
- (04) Deputy Tea Commissioner (Exports).
- (05) Asst. Tea Commissioners/Tea Instructors/Inspectors.
- (06) Chairman, Private Tea Factory Owners' Association.
- (07) Chief Executive Officers, Plantation Management Companies.
- (08) Secretary General, The Planters' Association of Ceylon.
- (09) Chief Internal Auditor, Sri Lanka Tea Board.
- (10) Chairman, Colombo Tea Traders' Association.
- (11) All Brokers of Tea.
- (12) Superintendent, Government Audit.
- (13) Director, Tea Research Institute. :- Please copy this to all your regional extension centers.
- (14) Chairman, Tea Small Holding Development Authority:- Please copy this to all your Regional Managers.
- (15) Chairman, Tea Shakthi Fund.