Yield Trends in the Ingestry Tea Estate, Hatton

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Tea is a major cash crop in Sri Lanka. Predicting the potential effects of many changes on tea crop prompts the user to analyze how the crop responds to many variables. Many plantation companies and their estates maintain highly accurate records on their crops and other aspects. However, they do not conduct proper analysis of these records to understand the yield trends in relation to different variables. Such analysis will allow estates to take management decisions with high accuracy. The objective of the present study was to study the yield trends in the Ingestry estate, Hatton to take better management decisions when conducting field practices. In this regard, the present study was mainly focused on identifying yield trends in pruning cycle, age of the stand, cultivar and rainfall using the records maintained at the estate. In this regard yield records maintained by Ingestre Estate in the Cycle Yield Book, Tea book and Year Budget Book from 2000-2022 were used for the study. The results of the study revealed that the total yield of studied tea fields declined with successive pruning cycles. This may be due to aging of the tea bushes. Yields of different fields were found different despite they were going through parallel in the pruning cycles. This can be attributed to the differences in many factors such as soil conditions, cultivar and age. Second and third years of the pruning cycle produced the highest yields in the VP tea fields whereas OST fields showed relatively even yield patterns throughout the pruning cycle. April to June and September to December produced the highest yield during the calendar year. The annual yield patterns varied among cultivars. A regression analysis showed that relation between tea yield and rainfall was non-significant. This information can be used for better planning field practices.

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