

HISTORY OF CEYLON TEA

1824

A tea plant was brought to Ceylon by the British from China and was planted in the Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya. (non commercial)

1839

Establishment of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

1854

Establishment of the Planters' Association of Ceylon

1867

James Taylor planted the first 19 acres of tea in Loolecondra Estate near Kandy, Ceylon and this marked the birth tea industry in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

1872

First sale of Loolecondra teas in Kandy

1873

Export of Sri Lanka's first tea consignment of 23 lbs from Loolecondra Estate to London

1876

Founding of the first Broking firm John Brothers & Co.

1877

Manufacture of first "SIROCCO" tea drier by Samuel C. Davidson

1880

Manufacture of first tea rolling machine by John Walker & Co.

1883

The first public Colombo Auction was held at the premises of Somerville & Co.on 30th July, 1883, under the auspices of Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

1884

Construction of a Central Tea Factory on Fairy land Estate (Pedro) in Nuwara-Eliya

1891

Ceylon Tea established a record price of £36.15 per lb at the London Tea Auctions

1892

James Taylor, aged 57 years, died in Ceylon on 2nd May, 1892

1894

Formation of the Colombo Tea Traders' Association

1896

Colombo Brokers' Association was formed

1915

Mr. Thomas Amarasuriya, first Ceylonese to be appointed as Chairman of the Planters' Association

1925

Establishment of Tea Research Institute

1927

Sri Lanka's tea production exceeded 100,000 metric tons

Sri Lanka's tea exports exceeded 100,000 metric tons

1932

Formation of The Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board

Export of poor quality tea was prohibited

1934

World's largest tea bush was found in Ceylon at Battawatta Group, Madulsima. It had a diameter of 24 feet and a circumference of 67 feet. Four pounds of green leaf were plucked from it on one day

1935

Set up the International Tea Market Expansion Board (ITMEB) in which Ceylon was a founder member

1938

The Tea Research Institute commenced work on vegetative propagation at St. Coombs Estate, Talawakele

1940

Biological control of the leaf eating Tea Tortrix Caterpillar by the Tea Research Institute

1941

First Ceylonese Tea Broking house, M/s Pieris & Abeywardena was established

1944

Ceylon Estate Employers' Federation was established

1951

Export Duty on tea was introduced from 1st October, 1951

1955

First clonal tea fields came into bearing.

1958

Formation of the State Plantations Corporation

1959

Ad Valorem Tax was introduced on 1st June 1959 for teas sold at the Colombo Auctions

1961

Sri Lanka's registered tea extent exceeded 200,000 hectares

Sri Lanka's tea production exceeded 200,000 metric tons

1962

Sri Lanka's tea exports exceeded 200,000 metric tons

1963

Production and exports of Instant Teas commenced

1965

Sri Lanka became the World's largest tea exporter for the first time

1966

First International Tea Convention was held to celebrate 100 years of Tea Industry

1972

State take over of privately owned estates

1975

Nationalisation of Rupee and sterling companies

1976

Sri Lanka Tea Board was established

Formation of Janatha Estate Development Board (JEDB)

Establishment of the Tea Small Holding Development Authority (TSHDA)

Exports of tea bags has commenced

1980

Sri Lanka's participation at Moscow Olympics as official supplier of tea

1981

Import of teas for blending and re-exports was introduced

1982

Production and Exports of Green tea commenced

Sri Lanka's participation at 12th Commonwealth games at Brisbane as official supplier of tea

1983

Centennial year of the Colombo Tea Auctions

Production of CTC teas commenced in Sri Lanka

1987

Sri Lanka's participation in 'Expo 88' as official supplier of tea in Australia

1992

Sri Lanka completes 125 years in her Tea Industry. An international convention was held in Colombo to mark the occasion

Formation of the Tea Research Board

Abolition of the Export Duty on 21st December, 1992

Abolition of the Ad Valorem Tax on 21st December, 1992

1993

Privatisation of the management of Government owned tea estates

1996

Sri Lanka's tea production exceeded 250,000 metric tons

1997

Tea Exports reached 250,000 metric tons

2000

Tea production exceeded 300,000 metric tons

2001

Commencement of on-line sales of tea by Forbes & Walker Ltd., at the Colombo Tea Auctions

Establishment of a Tea Museum at Kandy

2002

Tea Association of Sri Lanka was formed