PHYTOCHEMICAL SCREENING OF TANNIN BEARING PLANTS

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The leather industry requires large amounts of tannins. The demand for tanned leather and consequently the demand for vegetable tanning extracts will increase in the future. There is also a good export market for vegetable tanning extracts. In view of this, a phytochemical screening of tannin bearing plants growing in different parts of Sri Lanka has been undertaken.

Several plants belonging to the plant families Aricèniaceae, Combretaceae, Leguminosae, Myrsinaceae, Pteridaceae, Rhizophoraceae, Rubiaceae, Sonneratiaceae, and Tamoricaceae have been screened for tannins. Nine out of the thirty specimens screened had more than twenty percent (dry plant weight basis) tannins which were highly water soluble. Table I gives the names of these tannin-rich plants.

TABLE I

Plant Name	Plant Part	%Tannin	%Water Solubility
COMBRETACEAE			
Lumnitsera racemosa Willd.	bark	22	100
Terminalia chebula Retz.	fruits	39	97
LEGUMINOSAE			
Acacia leucophloea (Roxb.) Willd.	bark	25	100
Cassia auriculata L.	bark	34	93
—Do—	leaf	29	100
MYRSINACEAE			
Aegiceras corniculatum (L.) Blanco	bark	24	80
RHIZOPHORACEAE			
Ceriops tagal (Perr.) C. B. Rob.	bark	35	91
Rhizophora apiculata Bl.	bark	28	100
RUBIACEAE			
Scyphiphora hydrophyllaceae	bark	25	100

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References:

1. A study on Vegetable Tanning Extracts in eight selected export markets, International Trade Centre, UNCTAD 1971, Geneva.