

THE CHLOROPHYLL CONTENT OF TEA CLONES IN RELATION TO THEIR CLASSIFICATION AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

K. Sivapalan, Jayanthi de Silva, P. V. de Alwis and A. Ranasinghe
(Tea Research Institute, Talawakelle)

Chlorophyll is undoubtedly the most important of plant pigments and the chlorophyll status plays a decisive role in determining the photosynthetic efficiency and productivity of the plant. In tea, chlorophyll content is further implicated in the development of 'blackness', an important criterion in the commercial evaluation of tea.

Tea clones are classified on the basis of their yield and quality potential among other characteristics. An extensive survey of the chlorophyll status of the clones was undertaken in an attempt to establish analytical parameters that may be useful in clonal classification.

The results of this study showed that shade consistently increased the chlorophyll content of tea leaves. Geographical location of the clones and climatic variations did not markedly affect the chlorophyll content. The grouping of clones on the basis of chlorophyll content was found to be possible and the limitations of such a classification will be discussed.