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THE ANALYSIS OF DAILY RAINFALL, POTENTIAL EVAPORATION AND MOISTURE STATUS OF THE SOIL IN LOW COUNTRY TO DETERMINE THE MOST SUITABLE DAY FOR PLANTING TEA *(Camellia sinensis (L) KUNTZE*

G. Wadasinghe & H. S. N. Peiris
Tea Research Institute of Sri Lanka, Low Country Station, Ratnapura

Twenty years weather data recorded at St. Joachim Estate Agromet Station (30 m amsl) were used in this study. The moisture status of the soil was determined by calculating available water using daily rainfall, potential evaporation and field capacity and permanent wilting point. Then the probability levels for start of rain, end of rain, length of rainy season, length of dry period and most suitable day for planting tea were calculated for both south-west and north-east monsoon periods.

The 90% probability for most suitable day for planting tea was 19th May and 4th October in south-west and north-east monsoon period respectively. Although, the length of favourable season for establishment of tea was marginally better in north-east monsoon period, the south-west monsoon period is better for planting tea due to shorter dry period followed by monsoon rains.