B6

A STUDY OF MICRO-ORGANISMS IN BLACK TEA AND THEIR ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH STORAGE

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The microbiology of black tea under accelerated storage was studied. The tea extracts were plated and counts were taken to evaluate microbial populations.

All seven grades (BOP, BOPF, BP, BM, Dust, Fannings and Refuse tea) were taken for determination of best extraction media and shaking time and evaluation of effect of brewing on microbial population of black tea. For the storage experiment BOP (Broken Orange Pekoe) was used. Under accelerated storage conditions the physical, chemical changes in tea in relation to microbial population were studied.

Results show that there is an increase in fungal count, decrease in amino acid content, while theaflavin, flavonols and bacterial counts were constant. Firing of dhools did not sterilize the tea but the colony counts decreased by one order.