

A QUALITY INDEX FOR ASSESSING HIGH GROWN TEAS

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Amongst different teas available in the world today, Sri Lankan teas are reputed mainly for its flavour characteristics. In particular the high-grown seasonal teas from the Dimbulla and Uva Districts have often fetched outstanding prices at the Tea Auctions mainly for their flavour properties.

Studies on the Methylene Chloride extractable steam volatiles of seasonal black teas from the Uva District showed that trans-2-hexenal, linalool, phenyl acetaldehyde, geraniol nerol, methyl salicylate, cis-jasmone, B-ionone, neralidol indole, phenyl ethyl alcohol⁽¹⁾ are the main flavour contributing constituents found in the aroma complex.

Analysis of the data obtained for the flavour profiles of these teas from several estates in this region revealed the existence of a co-relation between linalool/trans-2-hexenal and the prices they obtained at the tea auctions. The above ratio therefore could be used as an Index in assessing the quality of different teas.

References:

1. Fernando, V. & Roberts, G.R. (1984) J.Sci.Food Agric. 35: 71-76