

PROGRESS IN PLANTING OF CLONAL TEA IN CEYLON

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It was estimated by Visser (1) from data collected from estates that up to end of November, 1958 at least 400 acres had been planted with clonal tea, of which 194 acres were in the low-country, 106 acres in the mid-country and 98 acres up-country.

According to the Tea Controller (2) to whom estates planting tea under the Tea Replanting Subsidy Scheme send returns periodically, the acreage under clonal tea up to end of November, 1963 was only 5996, although when the scheme came into operation early in 1959 it was envisaged that a minimum of 30,000 acres would be replanted in the next five or six years.

In order to obtain full particulars of the different clones planted and the extents under each clone a comprehensive questionnaire was sent to all tea estates in Ceylon with over 100 acres of tea each in November, 1963. In all 826 circulars were sent out and 395 replies received, of which 277 gave the following information on clonal tea:

A. Total extent under clonal tea 5958 acres.

B. Extents under T.R.I. clones:

	T.R.I. Clone	Acres
1.	2023	698.75
2.	2024	1133.75
3.	2025	313.75
4.	2026	641.50
5.	2027	13.75
6.	2022	31.75
7.	777	7.50
8.	Mixed T.R.I. Clones	749.25
	Total ...	3,590.00

C. Extent under other estate clones 2368.00 acres.

Of the other estate clones the following were the more popular ones:

Balangoda Group	MT 18, DG39
Craig	CR 4
Craighead	CH 13
Diyagama	N
Drayton	DTI, DT 95
Kenilworth	KEN 16/3
Kirkoswald	K136, K145, K150
Nayabedde	N3
Neluwa	NL3/1 NL4/2
Tangakelle	CY9, WY
Uva Highlands	UH9/3,

D. The following estates were having over 100 acres under clonal tea.

Carolina Group (Lower Dickoya)	161 acres
Enselwatte (Morawak Korale)	372 "
Endane Estate (Ratnapura)	246 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
Galmuduna Estate (Dolosbage)	108 "
Palmgarden Group (Ratnapura)	269 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Pelawatte State Plantation (Kalutara)	353 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

It will be observed that T.R.I. 2024 covers the highest acreage under clonal tea, and is followed by T.R.I. 2023 which is a popular clone in the low-country. The largest extents under clonal tea are also in the low-country where much new land has been brought under tea cultivation. Yields of over 4,500 lbs. per acre of made tea from extents of over 10 acres under T.R.I. 2023 and T.R.I. 2026 have been reported from Palmgarden Group, Ratnapura, while in most estates up-country T.R.I. 2024 and T.R.I. 2025, and some other estate clones have produced over 2,000 lbs. per acre.

With the remarkably high yields produced by clonal tea and the substantial increase in tea subsidy from Rs. 2,500/- to Rs. 3,750/- per acre now payable under the revised subsidy scheme, there is every possibility of an appreciable increase taking place not only in the pace of replanting but also in the total extent replanted each year. It is gratifying to note from a recent survey that there is no dearth of planting material of the more popular clones approved jointly by the T.R.I. and the Tea Control Department. A revised list of the approved clones indicating the sources of supply has been recently issued for the information of estates.

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References

- TEA CONTROLLER—Letter of 19th December, 1963 to the Director, *Tea Research Institute*.
- VISSER, T. (1958). The Position of Clonal Selection in Ceylon in Relation to Replanting. *Tea Quart.* 29: 154-159.