

ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka is one of the oldest tea producing countries in the world, with its commercial production having commenced more than 125 years ago. Tea is a natural beverage that competes in the world market with other natural beverages like Coffee, Cocoa and other alcoholic and formulated products like soft drinks and carbonated drinks. Tea has two basic forms: black tea and green tea. Its relevant market therefore is decided by the area in which these types of tea are manufactured and the domestic demand for such types of tea. Today Tea industry is challenged by several issues in relation to field production, processing and export market.

Kahawatte Plantation Ltd (KPL) is one of the 20 Regional Plantations companies established on 22nd June 1992. Main product of this company is Ceylon black tea and other products are rubber, cinnamon, and timber. There are about 9341 people as estate workers, 534 employees as estate staff, 51 employees as estate executives and 45 employees as head office staff working under KPL.

Tea marketing and Quality management are very critical disciplines in tea industry and it is a one specificity in tea industry. Because producing of superior quality products is the strategic way to gain better market via customer satisfaction. Under this circumstance KPL follow Quality Assurance System to assure quality from A to Z during their production process. Estate and factory visits, Broker visit, Tea liquoring and tasting and benchmarking are the major technical events, which strengthen the Quality Assurance system of the company.

The company could change their estates as a preferred for tea supplier by offering high quality tea grades through this system which resulting higher auction averages and frequent weekly top prices leading to higher revenue in last recent months. With the situation of present global tea trade, the new standards such as HACCP, ISO 22000 become essential concepts to survive in the market and because of the facts of the financial issues of the company, it will take some more period to implement such standards.