

## **Govt. asked to incentivise tea replantation**

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### **Disruptions in replanting caused by host of problems**

The chairman of the Tea Trade Association of Cochin, Thomas Jacob, has said that both the Central and State governments should incentivise tea replantation to help increase production.

Productivity in Kerala had dwindled largely due to the disruptions in replanting operations. The high cost of labour in the State was one of the reasons why replanting operations had been held up in Kerala. He said productivity in Kerala stood around 1,600 kg per hectare while in Tamil Nadu, it was in the range of 2,500 kg to 2600 kg.

According to figures from the Tea Trade Association, Kerala has shown an increase of more than four million kg in tea production during 2020 compared to 2019 despite the obstacles posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in disruptions in production and processing operations caused by a severe shortage of workers as well as restrictions on the movement of workers. The State produced 59.05 million kg of tea during 2019 in comparison to 63.09 million kg in 2020.

The tea production in South India stood around 222 million kg in 2020 against 218 million kg in 2019. The increase was more than 3 million kg. Karnataka showed a marginal increase in tea production at 5.13 million kg in 2020 against 4.63 million kg in 2019 but Kerala's neighbouring Tamil Nadu produced 153.83 million kg against 155.31 million kg in 2019, which was a fall of 1.48 million kg.

He said that heavy rain during the current year could cause some problems on the tea production front. The association figures showed that sale through the Cochin auction centre stood at 45,030 tonnes during 2020 as against 66,600 tonnes at Coonoor and 14,832 tonnes at Coimbatore. Figures showed that sale at the Cochin centre was 51,005 tonnes during 2019.

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