

## Cultivation And Marketing Analysis Of Kangra Tea

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### Introduction:

In Himachal Pradesh tea bushes were first planted at Kullu, Mandi, Chamba and Kangra district but soils of these regions except the Kangra district were not capable to hold its roots in. As of now the most tea gardens are set up in the foothills of mystic Dhauldhhar mountain range of the western Himalayas. The first commercial cultivation was done in Holta, Palampur in 1852. The superior quality of Kangra tea helped it to bag gold and silver medal in London and Amsterdam in international conventions. The tea cultivations which once covered more than 5000 hectares of land in Kangra has come down to 2312 hectares & since then it was struggling to mark its place in tea map of India. The Kangra tea has also received the GI tag in 2005 but government failed to advertise it. As of now the tea industry of Kangra only accounts up to 20 crores INR and having at least 1000 families dependent on it.

### Kangra Tea Cultivtion:

<b>Agro –climatic conditions</b>	Temp range from 20°C-30°C is ideal for plantation during April to September. Rainfall required – 150cm-300cm
<b>pH range</b>	4.5-5.5 is ideal
<b>Soil</b>	Sandy loam to silty loam type of soil
<b>Planting season</b>	Planting is mainly done in rainy season (June-July) or in (September – October ) if any irrigation facility is present
<b>Spacing</b>	For double hedge – 105x70cm For valley plantation -105x65, 105x75cm
<b>Irrigation</b>	Most of the plants are dependent on the rainfall but 2-3 irrigation is required in initial years.

<b>NPK</b>	N- 10 Kg of nitrogen for every 100 Kg of crops  P- 30-40 Kg  K- 40-50% of the amount of nitrogen applied and should be done before the onset of monsoon
<b>Varieties</b>	Kangraasha, kangrajawala, Tr-1 happy valley -9

**Harvesting:**

The harvesting season is from April to September. There are commonly two ways of harvest tea leaves viz., Handpicking and Mechanical method. The right way to harvest the Kangra tea is to pluck one bud and two leaves at a time as that is why Kangra tea is having a logo of one bud and two leaves. After plucking of raw leaves these leaves are immediately steamed to produce steamed tea. On an average 5 Kg of raw leaves are required to produce 1 kg of steamed tea. Handpicking method is very laborious and expensive method but this method results in good quality of tea whereas mechanical method is undoubtedly fast but results in low quality tea.



**Constraints in Existing System:**

1. Costly Labor
2. Urbanization
3. Unavailability of local market
4. Competition
5. Poor government policies

**Tea Industry in Himachal Pradesh:**

**History**

There were four cooperative tea factories for its manufacturing and marketing. These four factories were opened in Bir, Palampur, Dharamshala and Baijnath, but forlornly three out

four factories were shut down due to high economical losses and later on sold to the private owners. Today only Palampur co-operative unit is functioning.

### **Palampur Co-Op Society**

This factory was established in 1980 in Palampur and is running till date. This tea factory is able to produce 5 lakh KG of tea annually. This tea factory alone responsible for producing maximum amount of manufactured tea.



### **Manjhee Valley Tea Estate**

Manjhee valley tea estate is 100 years old and grows tea in around 650 acres of land. This estate produces around 150000 KGs of tea annually.

### **Dharamshala Tea Estate**

This estate was established in 1882 in Dharamshala in 70 hectares of land, owned by the Mann family. They sell their produce with the name of Mann brand and export to most of the western countries. There are many other industries present in the valley e.g. the Wah estate, Green Bud (in Gopalpur), Himalayan enterprises and Him tea etc. which are the main stakeholders of the produce of Kangra tea. Other tea factories which were set up by government were given on lease. The Dharamshala tea factory was given on lease on 2003 to the family of Singh's and in 2006 the other tea factory in Baijnath was given on lease to the Tiwary's.

### Swot Analysis of Kangra Tea:

Brief description of the factors affecting the tea production in the valley by swot analysis:

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Suitable climate</li> <li>● Superior quality</li> <li>● A unique taste</li> <li>● Availability of land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Labor problems</li> <li>● Urbanization</li> <li>● Lack of mechanization</li> <li>● Lack of local market</li> <li>● Lack of quality material for propagation</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Various govt. schemes</li> <li>● Available G.I. tag</li> <li>● Superior past records</li> <li>● Various subsidies on modernizing technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pest and disease attack</li> <li>● Competition from rivals</li> <li>● Increasing age of skilled labor</li> </ul>

### Role of Various Agencies:

#### CSKHPKV University

CSKHPKV University helped the tea industry to significantly increase the production of tea in the area. The university also helped farmers, now it's working on organic production of tea in the valley.

#### State government

The state govt. also provided huge funds to propagate new plants and provide subsidies on inputs. Govt. also introduced laws which don't allow the tea owners to sell their farms to anyone, these laws and regulations also helped to save the tea industry.

#### Tea board of India

Tea board is the apex body in governing the tea related activities in India. The board endorses the tea cultivation in the region. They provide financial aid to the tea garden owners. They also provide capital to the tea factories. Tea board of India regulates the trade of tea around the world. Tea board also accounts for all the data related to the tea production and trade. They are also responsible for promoting the self-help groups in the area

1. Tea board of India promote the Kangra tea in various International fairs

2. Tea board also focuses on increasing the production of tea
3. Tea board also acquired various abandoned land in order to increase production.

### **IHBT**

IHBT helps the Himalayan state to increase their potential. The IHBT also help to uplift the production of tea in the state by introducing the mechanization in tea farms & it also help the govt. to market the GI tag and develop the better products from the low quality tea leaves.

### **Conclusion:**

Kangra tea is an orthodox variety of tea and also has a lot of potential to uplift the economy of Himachal Pradesh and could generate the employment in the area. As it is a boon for Himachal Pradesh, Govt. has to play a key role in retrieval of the grandeur of the tea sector. There is need of Mechanization, improvement in planting material, an auction center near the state and providing the subsidies to the tea estate owners and small farmers to encourage them. These steps can define the future of the tea industry in Kangra and help it to again conquer its position in the world map.