Sri Lanka Tea Board Minimum Quality Standards (MQS) for "Sri Lankan Origin Tea"

1) Basic Requirements for 'Black Tea': ISO 3720: 2011 Sri Lanka Standards 135:2009 (AMD 421:2011)

Characteristic	*Requirement*	*Test Method Ref.*
	Black Tea	
1. Water extract, mass fraction	min. 32 %	ISO 9768:1994; SLS 28 Part 7:2008
2. Total Ash, mass fraction	min. 4% - max. 8%	ISO 1575:1987; SLS 28 Part 3:2008
3. Water - soluble ash, mass fraction of total ash	min. 45%	ISO 1576:1988; SLS 28 Part 4:2008
4. Alkalinity of water-soluble ash (as KOH), mass fraction	min. 1.0% - max. 3.0%	ISO 1578:1975; SLS 28 Part 6:2008
5. Acid insoluble ash, mass fraction	max. 1.0%	ISO 1577:1987; SLS 28 Part 5:2008
6. Crude fibre, mass fraction	max. 16.5%	ISO 15598:1999;SLS 28 Part 8:2008
7. Total polyphenols, mass fraction	min. 9%	ISO 14502-1: 2005; SLS 28 Part 9/ Section 1: 2011

2) Basic Requirements for 'Green Tea': ISO 11287: 2011 Sri Lanka Standards 1413:2011

Characteristic	*Requirement*	*Test Method Ref.*
	Green Tea	
1. Water extract, mass fraction	min. 32 %	ISO 9768:1994; SLS 28 Part 7:2008
2. Total Ash, mass fraction	min. 4% - max. 8%	ISO 1575:1987; SLS 28 Part 3:2008
3. Water - soluble ash, Mass fraction of total ash	min. 45%	ISO 1576:1988; SLS 28 Part 4:2008
4. Alkalinity of water-soluble ash (As KOH), mass fraction	min. 1.0% - max. 3.0%	ISO 1578:1975; SLS 28 Part 6:2008
5. Acid insoluble ash, mass fraction	max. 1.0%	ISO 1577:1987; SLS 28 Part 5:2008
6. Crude fibre, mass fraction	max. 16.5%	ISO 15598:1999;SLS 28 Part 8:2008
7. Total catechins, mass fraction	min. 7%	ISO 14502-2: 2005; SLS 28 Part 9/ Section 2: 2011
8. Total polyphenols, mass fraction	min. 11%	ISO 14502-1: 2005; SLS 28 Part 9/ Section 1: 2011
9. Ratio total catechins to total polyphenols, mass fraction	min. 0.5	-

SRI LANKA TEA BOARD DIRECTIVES FOR 'MQS'

These 'directives' has been issued under the regulatory power by Sri Lanka Tea Board Law No. 14 of 1975, Tea Control Act No. 51 of 1957 and Tea (Tax and Control of Export) Act No. 16 of 1959 and their subsequent amendments aiming to minimize the presence of health risk hazard/s for its consumers. Tea Board directives are voluntary private standards aiming to provide quality assured tea for 'Ceylon tea' consumers. However, exporters of 'Sri Lankan Origin Tea' should be guided by the standards stipulated by respective health authorities and Custom requirements in the destination port and/or tea importing country.

3) Foreign Matter/ Extraneous Matters – Completely free
(Teas should comply with ISO 3720:2011 and ISO 11287: 2011 parameters specified above)

4) Detectable Metals:

	Name of Metal	*Acceptable Limit*	*Test Method/s*
1.	Iron (as ferrous)	– max. 300 mg/kg	AAS/ICP-MS/OES
2.	Copper	– max. 100 mg/kg	AAS/ICP-MS/OES
3.	Lead	– max. 2 mg/kg	AAS/ICP-MS/OES
4.	Zinc	- max. 100 mg/kg	AAS/ICP-MS/OES
5.	Cadmium	– max. 0.2 mg/kg	AAS/ICP-MS/OES
6.	Sodium	- max. 0.7% (m/m)	AFS/FFM

(AAS – Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry; ICP – Inductive Coupled Plasma Spectroscopy – MS/OES; AFS – Atomic Flame Emission Spectrophotometry and FFM – Flame Photometry Techniques, wherever applicable)

5) Microbiological Requirement:

Characteristic	*Requirement*		*Test Method Ref.*
	Black Tea	*Green Tea*	
Total Plate Count	Max. 10,000 cfu/g		ISO 4833-1: 2013; SLS 516 Part 1/ Section 1: 2013
Yeast & Moulds Count	max.1,000 cfu/g		ISO 21527-2: 2008; SLS 516 Part 2/ Section 2: 2013*
Total *Coliform* Count	max.10 MPN/g		ISO 4831: 2006; SLS 516 Part 3/ Section 1: 2013
E-*Coli*	Absent / g		ISO 7251: 2005; SLS 516 Part 12: 2013
Salmonella	Absent / 25 g		ISO 6579:2002; SLS 516: Part 5: 1992

**Note:*
1). Teas under damp/ wet condition (Water activity, A_w > 95%) are required to use test method: ISO 21527-1: 2008: SLS 516: Part 2/ Section 1: 2013.
2). In addition to the above, concerned parties should be guided by the standards applicable in the destination country as required by the importer.

6) Permissible Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for Pesticides in final product of tea:

Following Seventeen (17) pesticides are permitted in final product of tea which were recommended by the Tea Research Institute of Sri Lanka (TRISL) as revised by the TRI Advisory Circular No. PU 1: Serial No. 01/20; issued in November 2020. Therefore, Sri Lankan Origin Tea should not contain residues of any other pesticides. Importantly, exporters of tea should be guided by the standards in the importing country. Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) established by EU and Japan for the respective pesticides are given for information and necessary guidance.

	Name of the Pesticide	*Category/ type*	*MRL EU Regulation (EC) mg/kg (ppm)*	*MRL Japan: Positive list mg/kg (ppm)*
1.	Brunolium/Tar Acids	F……	Exempted……	Exempted
2.	Calcium hydroxide	N/A……	Exempted……	Exempted
3.	Chlorantraniliprole	I……	0.02……	50
4.	Copper hydroxide	F……	40 (as Cu)……	Exempted
5.	Copper oxide	F……	40 (as Cu)……	Exempted
6.	Diazinon	I……	0.05 ……	0.1
7.	Diuron	W……	0.05 ……	1
8.	Fipronil	I ……	0.005 ……	0.002
9.	Fluopyram	N……	0.05 ……	-
10.	Glufosinate ammonium	W……	0.10 ……	0.30
11.	Glyposate	W……	2 ……	1
12.	Hexaconazole	F……	0.05 ……	0.01*
13.	Methylisocyanate/Metam	N……	0.02……	0.10
14.	Oxyfluorfen	W……	0.05 ……	0.01*
15.	Propiconazole	F ……	0.10 ……	0.10
16.	Sulphur	A/I ……	Exempted ……	Exempted
17.	Tebuconazole	F ……	0.05 ……	80

A-Acaricide; F-Fungicide; I-Insecticide; N-Nematicide; W-Weedicides; N/A-Not Applicable

**: Denotes that MRLs are not established by the respective Authority. However, default MRL of 0.01mg/kg is defined as the Limit.*

An issuance of updated Sri Lanka Tea Board Standards/ Guidelines for tea is subject to periodical revision, as decided by the Sri Lanka Tea Board.