Planting out cuttings/ field establishment

Tea establishment can be done at various spacing levels (Table 1). However, adequate spacing should be observed since it influences good canopy formation as well as field operations like input application and plucking.

Table 1: Tea plant spacing and density

S. No	Plant spacing (ft)	Plants/ Ha
1	4 x2	13,480
2	3½ x 2½	12,299
3	3 x3	11,970
4	4 x 4½	10,766
5	3¼ x 3¼	10,000
6	3 x 3½	10,254
7	4 x 3	8,775
8	3½ x 3½	8,784
9	5 x 2	10,757
10	4 x 4	6730
11	5 x 3	7,179
12	5 x 4	5,383
13	5 x 2½	8,611
14	4 x 2½	18,150
15	1 x 2 x 2½	16,754

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TEA QUALITY AND QUANTITY ENHANCEMENT



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Tea quality control

The quality of teas is influenced by the quality of leaf plucked. Course/ hard and longer plucked materials lower tea quality. For good quality tea, 2 leaves and a bud are recommended to be plucked. (Figs below)



Good quality tea leaf for processing



Recommended tea leaf

Like pruning, plucking can be done by machine or hands. While machine plucking is quicker, hand plucking produces better quality tea because it is selective and leaves young shoots. It also enhances quicker shoot growth, thus shorter plucking intervals (7-10 days) and higher yields compared to 30 days in machine harvesting.

Where possible, hand plucking should be advocated compared to machine plucking
In order to maintain a good plucking table a plucking wand/ rid should be used because it avoids hard plucking. However, to ensure high quality leaf for processing the leaf sample should reflect the proportions summarized in table 2

Table 2: Good quality leaf plucking standards

	Leaf category	%
1	Two leaves and a bud	60
2	One leaf and a bud	10
3	Tree leaves and a bud	10
4	Banjhi	5
5	Loose leaf	5
	Total	100

