Tea Clones at Rwebitaba ZARDI

There are over 270 clones and seedling teas at Rwebitaba Tea Research Centre, majority of which are not yet officially released to farmers.

Table 1: High yielding Tea Clones at Rwebitaba ZARDI

Clone	Yield kg (Kg mt/ ha	% Total polyphenols	Quality index	Immature leaf colour	Resistance to pests/diseases	Adaptability stability
303/557	7817	20.57	Medium quality	Yellow-green	Susceptible to nematodes	Average
11/4	6132	22.5	Medium quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Unknown/ commercial
108/82	5329	21.07	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Unknown/ shelved
7/9	5246	24.20	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Above average
100/5	5238	22.73	Medium quality	Yellow-green	Tolerant	Unknown/ shelved
31/8	5049	21.47	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Average
12/19	4686	24.30	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Average
12/12	4671	23.90	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Average
6/8	4441	22.07	High quality	Yellow-green	Susceptible nematodes	Average
6/10	3876	22.03	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Average
31/11	3753	22.97	High quality	Yellow-green	Moderate	Unknown/ shelved

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TEA ESTABLISHMENT IN THE FIELD



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E[illegible]al requirements for tea growing

ii. Soils

Soils suitable for tea growing should be deep fertile, of about 6ft depth & well drained. The soil should have pH range of 4.5 to 5.5. Water logged areas should be Avoided.

ii. Temperature

Tea responds well to temperature within the range of 13°C (min.) to 30°C (max.).

iii. Rainfall

Tea requires evenly distributed rainfall with a dry period not exceeding one month. The mean annual rainfall should not be below 1,200mm. However, some relative dry weather is ideal for fresh shoot formation and growth.

iv. Altitude

Tea grows well at an altitude of between 1,500 to 2,250 metres above sea level. At low altitude temperatures are likely to be higher than the minimum, while very high altitudes and cold temperatures slow down tea growth.

Land Preparation

Whether forest or savannah, land clearance should ensure the total removal of all the woody material together with its roots to avoid the spread of root- rots.

Planting cuttings

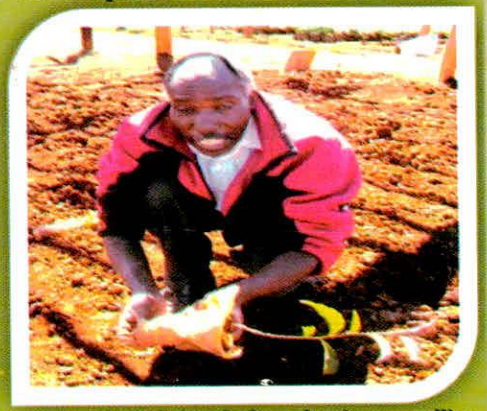
Mark the field for planting holes at a spacing of 4ft x 2ft gives (13,480 plants/ha.), 4ft x 2.5ft gives (10,766 plants/ ha.) or 4ft x 3ft gives (8,775 plants/ha.). These 3 spacings are the most preferred for planting tea.

Making holes and Planting

a) Make a planting hole of 30 x 30 cm. Mix top soils from each hole with 30g of triple super phosphate (TSP) or 15g of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP).

b) Place a 20cm depth of soil fertilizer mixture in the hole and slice the polythlene tube with a sharp knife at the side and at the bottom.

c) Compact the soil with the hands until the top of the plants cylinder of soil is covered, but never to cover the mother leaf of the tea plantlet.



Removing the poly bag before planting a seedling



Placing the tea plant in the hole



Soil at original level in the pot

Drainage

Drainage of the plain damp soil is impermeable to air, difficult to work and does not favour root penetration, thus roots could rot when they come into contact with underground water table. This can be improved upon by installing a drainage system to elimanate localised build up of water on tea root system.

Erosion Control

Tea fields are sometimes established on hill slopes, thus such areas are prone to soil erosion.

When the tea plants are young, the drainage system can be supplemented by a series of blind trenches 3 to 4 meters long, by 0.30m wide and 0.60m deep.

Interspersed hedges of leguminous plants and mulching play a considerable part in combating erosion during the early years of establishment

Shading Tea

Shading in tea is most necessary for the newly planted tea plants, but usually this is temporally.

Young, tea plants can be protected from sun, drying winds and hailstone by hedges of leguminous plants (*Albizia,Leucaena, Gliricidia, Acasia,, Erythrina Crotalaria, Tephrosia*). However, too much shading should be avoided as may lead to serious cases of Brown leaf spot.