

SRI LANKA TEA BOARD
Tea Commissioner's Division
No. 574, Galle Road, Colombo 03

Ref: TB/TC/STPT (401)-2027

05th October 2026

All Registered Tea Manufacturers and Regional Plantation Companies

FACTORY-BASED SMART TEA PLUCKER TEAMS TRAINING PROGRAMME 2027

1. Purpose of the Circular

The tea sector continues to face a shortage of skilled labour for land preparation, cultivation and green-leaf harvesting. The shortage affects the maintenance of proper plucking rounds on tea lands of all sizes. Leaf plucking is also the most labour-intensive field operation and accounts for approximately 70 per cent of total labour use in tea cultivation.

To address this need, the Sri Lanka Tea Board will continue the training program to establish trained, factory-based Smart Tea Plucker Teams in tea-growing districts. These teams will provide mechanized plucking and other field services to tea landowners while following Good Agricultural Practices. Each approved beneficiary must keep the trained team and machinery operational for at least three years.

2. Eligibility and Method of Application

- I. Registered tea manufacturers or Regional Plantation Companies are eligible to apply.
- II. The application shall be completed using Form No. TB/TC/STPT/2027 and endorsed by the relevant Registered Tea Manufacturer or Regional Plantation Company.
- III. The completed application shall be submitted to the Assistant Tea Commissioner responsible for the area in which the factory or estate is situated.
- IV. Eligible complete applications will be considered in the order received, subject to the approved budget and the availability of allocations under the scheme.

3. Team formation and Training

- I. Each selected applicant shall form a team of 10 to 15 field workers, employees or other suitable persons who are willing to complete the required training and provide field services. Members must be between 18 and 45 years of age.
- II. The selected team shall complete a five-day training program of at least 40 hours. The Sri Lanka Tea Board will arrange the program through the National Institute of Plantation Management, with technical assistance from the Tea Research Institute and the Tea Small Holdings Development Authority.
- III. Training will include theory and practical instruction on land preparation, planting, weeding, safe application of agrochemicals, green-leaf plucking, pruning, Good Agricultural Practices and the safe use and routine care of machinery and modern tools.

- IV. Approved expenditure relating to the five-day awareness and training program will be borne by the Sri Lanka Tea Board in accordance with the arrangements notified to selected applicants.

4. Eligible Equipment and Maximum Subsidy

No.	Eligible item	Quantity	Maximum allocation (Rs.)
1	Uniforms	10 sets	50,000.00
2	Plucking baskets	10 nos.	20,000.00
3	Safety boots	10 pairs	30,000.00
4	Battery-operated tea-plucking machines	04 units	280,000.00
5	Holing machine	02 units	120,000.00
Maximum total subsidy			500,000.00

5. Implementation and Subsidy Payment Procedure

- I. The selected applicant shall sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sri Lanka Tea Board and shall maintain the team and machinery in operation for at least three years from the date of signing.
- II. The beneficiary shall form and train the team and purchase all approved machinery, equipment and protective items listed in Section 4.
- III. After completing the team formation, training and purchases, the beneficiary shall notify the relevant Assistant Tea Commissioner and submit the original tax invoices, relevant pro forma invoices, copies of Goods Received Notes and any other documents requested for verification.
- IV. The subsidy will be paid after the Sri Lanka Tea Board verifies that the team has completed the required training and that the approved items have been purchased. The total payment shall not exceed Rs. 500,000.00.
- V. The Smart Tea Plucker Team may provide services to tea landowners in the relevant area and may charge reasonable fees for the field operations performed.
- VI. Transport for the team and machinery shall be arranged by the registered tea manufacturer or the team leader when services are requested by a tea landowner.

6. Terms and Conditions

- I. The beneficiary shall ensure that every team member completes the prescribed five-day training programme and follows the operational and safety instructions provided during training.
 - II. The registered tea manufacturer shall be responsible for servicing, repairing, and maintaining the machinery supplied or purchased under the scheme.
 - III. The registered tea manufacturer shall appoint a responsible officer to coordinate the team and respond to requests from tea landowners.
 - IV. The appointed officer shall maintain current records of machinery use, field operations, servicing and repairs, income received and payments made to team members.
 - V. The team leader shall maintain daily operational records in the formats issued by the Sri Lanka Tea Board and shall make those records available for verification when requested.
 - VI. Failure to maintain the team, machinery or required records in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding may result in action being taken under the conditions of that agreement.
7. Details of The Regional Assistant Tea Commissioners of SLTB Regional Offices and their areas of authority are as follows.

Regional Assistant Tea Commissioners

Areas of authority

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| i. | Assistant Tea Commissioner
Districts
Visaka Mawatha, New Badulla Road,
Bandarawela. Tel/Fax 057-2222812 | Badulla /Monaragala |
| ii. | Assistant Tea Commissioner
Walahanduwa Watta, Walahanduwa
Galle. Tel/Fax 091-2232052 Divisional | Galle District
(Except Elpitiya
Secretariat area) |
| iii. | Assistant Tea Commissioner
No 140, Ambagamuwa Road,
Gampola. Tel/Fax 081-2352279 | Kandy/Matale Districts |
| iv. | Assistant Tea Commissioner
No 23, New Lane, Uyanwatta,
Matara. Tel/Fax 041-2222636 | Matara District
Hambanthota District |
| v. | Assistant Tea Commissioner
61/1, New Town,
Rathnapura. Tel/Fax 045-2222136 | Ratnapura District
Kegalle District |

vi. Assistant Tea Commissioner
Wathurana Road,
Baduraliya. Tel/Fax: 034-2247444

Kalutara District
Galle Districts
(Elpitiya Divisional
Secretariat area)

vii. Assistant Tea Commissioner
No 10, Nanuoya Road,
Kelegala, Nuwara Eliya.
Tel : 0522234695/Fax: 0522234686

Nuwara Eliya District

8. Information regarding this subsidy scheme could be obtained from the Deputy Tea Commissioner at the SLTB Head Office.

Deputy Tea Commissioner (Regulatory)

Sri Lanka Tea Board

No 574, Galle Road, Colombo 03

Tel : 0112587448/ 0112587814 Fax: 0112580161

E Mail : tcdgeneral@pureceylontea.com



K A M K Jayawardena
Tea Commissioner

- Copies: :
- (1) Secretary, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
 - (2) Chairman, Sri Lanka Tea Board.
 - (3) Chairman, Tea Small Holding Development Authority
(Please copy this to your Re Regional Managers)
 - (4) Chairman, Tea Research Institute
 - (5) Chairman, Sri Lanka Tea Factory Owners Association
 - (6) Chairman, Janatha Estate Development Board
 - (7) Chairman, Sri Lanka State Plantation Corporation
 - (8) Chairman, Colombo Tea Traders' Association
 - (9) Chairman, Colombo Brokers Association
 - (10) Chairman, Planter's Association of Ceylon
 - (11) Director General, Sri Lanka Tea Board
 - (12) Director, Tea Research Institute
 - (13) Chief Internal Auditor, SLTB
 - (14) Superintendent - Government Audit Division
 - (15) Deputy Tea Commissioners (Development/Regulatory)
 - (16) All Assistant Tea Commissioners-Please issue copies to Tea Instructor/Inspectors



SRI LANKA TEA BOARD
TEA COMMISSIONER'S DIVISION

TB/TC/STPT/2027

APPLICATION FOR SMART TEA PLUCKER TEAMS TRAINING PROGRAMME 2027

Complete all applicable fields clearly, tick the relevant boxes, and attach the required supporting documents.

A APPLICANT DETAILS

Applicant category	☐ RPC ☐ Private tea factory ☐ Government entity ☐ Other: _____		
Applicant/entity name			
Registered address			
Company registration / NIC		Telephone	
Email address		WhatsApp number	

B TEA FACTORY AND ESTATE DETAILS

Name of the tea factory			
Factory registration no.	MF/BF _____	Registered manufacturer	
Factory address			
Factory telephone		Factory email	
Own estate Extent	_____ ha	SLTB Regional office	

C PROPOSED SMART TEA PLUCKER TEAM

Proposed team size	_____ members (10 to 15)	Members aged 18 to 45	☐ Yes ☐ No
Responsible coordinating officer		Designation and contact no.	

E APPLICANT DECLARATION

I certify that the information provided is true and complete. If selected, I agree to sign the Memorandum of Understanding, maintain the trained team and machinery for at least three years, keep the required records and facilitate inspections by the Sri Lanka Tea Board.

Name of authorised signatory		Designation	
Signature and official stamp		Date	

F RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL FOR OFFICIAL USE

Tea Inspector / Tea Instructor	Name	☐ Recommended ☐ Not Recommended	Signature	Date
Assistant Tea Commissioner	Name	☐ Recommended ☐ Not Recommended	Signature	Date

Note: Refer to Circular No. TB/TC/STPT (401)-2027. Incomplete applications may be returned for completion

