



ARSLA ORGANIC TEA GROWERS & PRODUCERS' COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD

The Arsla Organic Tea Growers and Producers' Cooperative Society Ltd. was formed and registered on 25-04-2013. It has been an offshoot of the Ri-Bhoi Tea Growers Association, a parent Welfare Organisation duly registered with the Government under the relevant Societies Act.

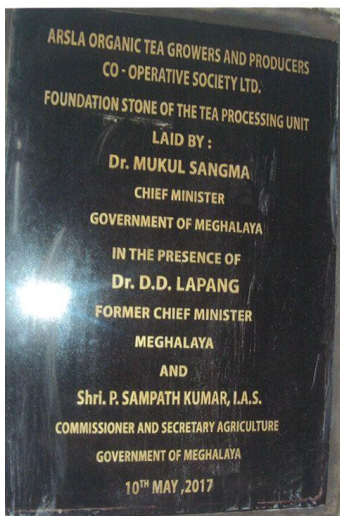
The members of the Arsla Organic Tea Growers and Producers' Cooperative Society Ltd. are the tea farmers who have been the members of the Ri-Bhoi Tea Growers Association. Only a tea farmer and his family members are allowed to become the member or shareholder of the Society and no one else.

Presently there are 30 tea farmers with Organic Certified Tea Plantations and 30 family members who have also bought Shares in the Society. The Society was formed with the sole objective to address their problems which have been mainly for sustainability of the Plantations.

The Government of Meghalaya through its Horticulture Department has facilitated the tea farmers right from sourcing the planting materials, supportive incentives for raising the plantations, capacity building, trainings on package of products, and subsidized inputs.

The Horticulture Department has also come up for the first time to help tea farmers for Organic Certification since the year 2009-

10. The farmers in Ri-Bhoi District and also in East Khasi Hills District, on being encouraged and motivated, joined under the Group Certification System in the year 2009-10 and 2011-12 with the total number of farmers at 69 and aggregate area of 150 Ha. But due to high maintenance cost, weed control and other reasons including resultant lower yields, 13 farmers have withdrawn from the Organic Certification System.



The Plantations were certified Organic since the year 2013, where the farmers have to bear the heat of lower yields and lower cost of green leaves procured by Bought Leaf Factories. It was really an irony where the organic green leaves have been processed as inorganic made tea due to absence of any Organic Processing Unit. This problem was intended to be addressed by focusing on the issue of formation of formation of a Cooperative Society by the farmers themselves to tap the economic potentiality and to sustain the Plantations by having their own Organic Tea Processing Unit.

During the years 2013 to 2017, the Society has tried to seek for the intervention of the Government and other Government agencies for enabling the Society to have its own processing unit, but unfortunately all efforts have turned futile.

The Society as a last resort has sought for Financial support by way of loan from the banking system and got the Foundation Stone for the Factory laid by the Honourable former Chief Minister of Meghalaya on 10-05-2017. The Loan was availed just after the Monsoon in November 2017 and the workable building structures and machineries that arrived on 28-03-2018 and DG were finally set up and installed on 27-07-2018.

The Trial run of the factory was carried out on 28-07-2018 and on 11-08-2018 and the quality of tea has been found to be encouraging.



The trial run of the factory was compelled to be carried out with the power generated from the stand by DG Set bought for the purpose, as the power supply from the MePDCL was delayed despite of having paid the full cost of the same in March 2018. Obviously, the factory to be powered by the DG Set is very expensive due to high cost of power.

However, now after long and consistent efforts by the Society, the Charging Approval of the Government of Meghalaya, Inspectorate of Electricity, has just been obtained on 21-09-2018 and efforts are continuing to complete the other remaining formalities for an agreement to be executed and provision of connection by MePDCL. We are hopeful that the connection by the MePDCL be completed within 01-10-2018 and commercial production shall be undertaken immediately thereafter, which we are hopeful to be within 04-10-2018.

The delay for processing the tea this year has been an upset for the goal of the Society as it shall hardly get only about 30 days time to process the declining quantity of fresh tea leaves, for it is going out of plucking season by mid November 2018. The delay is going to affect the outreach of made tea to the supply chain in market, the price that can be fetched as an organic product of the State.

Present position of the processing unit is that a Bolero Pick-up vehicle has just been bought for transporting tea leaves, some structures for an Office, Office Staff dwelling units and a Guest Room for Outstation professionals from facilitating agencies to be constructed, on getting the power connection.

The Society has been Financially helped out with subsidies from the MOVCDNER for a sum of Rs. 68.03.712/- under the component of Integrated Processing which has been a great relief on the interest burden of the Loan and sustainability of the Processing Unit, which the Society is very thankful to the Ministry of Agriculture Govt. of India, the Horticulture Department of Govt. of Meghalaya, the NEDFi and the Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology for their help, support and assistance that has enabled the Society to ground the processing unit. Another component for transportation, under the MOVCDNER shall also be sought for in the very near future.



The way forward for the Society is also very challenging with issues of packaging, approval of packaging system by the Organic Certification Body, rates of fresh tea leaves to be procured from Organic Farmers, pricing of



made tea, with market outreach and issues relating to the ingredients of made tea, the samples of which has been sent to credible agencies for analysis for carbohydrates, fats, proteins, and energy, and the results of which is awaited.

The Society looks forward for further guidance, support and facilities from all concern so that the challenges ahead are meticulously met for the success of the Society and the community at large.

Brief Profile of the Society:

Name	:	Arsla Organic Tea Growers' and Producers' Cooperative Society Ltd.
Headquarter	:	Patarim, Umsning.
Registration No. and Date	:	NPH 12 of 2013 Dated 25 th April 2013
Membership	:	Male - 34 ; Female - 26 ; Total - 60
Chairman	:	Shri. S. Dohling
Secretary	:	Shri. B. W. Chyne
Paid-up Share Capital	:	Rs. 23,64,500.00
Individual	:	Rs. 23,04,500.00
Government	:	Rs. 60,000.00
Business Turnover	:	Rs. Nil
Working Results	:	Rs. 1,96,220.00



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