

Tea Board app soon to monitor leaf quality, track origins

The app will help tea growers big and small, bought-leaf factories and the board

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The details of growers supplying green tea leaf to a particular factory would be captured by scanning the QR code of growers. (Shutterstock)

The Tea Board of India can now monitor the quality of green leaf harvested by growers through a mobile app and accordingly know at what price it has been sold to the factory.

Christened Chai Sahayak (tea assistant), the app has been developed by Guwahati-based IT company Sumato GlobalTech for the use of industry stakeholders. The app, which will be launched soon, has separate components for small tea growers and factories that buy green leaf from small and big tea growers and the Tea Board's field officers.

The app will be available in two languages — English and Assamese. Later, it will be made available in Bengali, Hindi and Tamil for all stakeholders across the country.

"It will be a comprehensive technological tool for better coordination, monitoring, transparency and efficient delivery of services," a senior tea board official said. It will also provide details about the green leaves' origin.

The details of growers supplying green leaf to a particular factory would be captured by scanning the QR code of growers. Thus, the codes will be recorded by the app and stored with the factories as well. "By maintaining the daily batch register of manufacture, the traceability of the product will be ensured," the official said.

The app will provide district-wise real-time weather forecast to tea growers so that they can take up field activities such as timely application of fertilizer and pesticide spray and follow the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's guidelines. The app will provide periodic advisory to growers and broadcast information on training programme/workshop to be conducted by the tea board. It will also provide day-to-day information of the green leaf price declared by every factory to small growers along with the minimum benchmark price.

"The stakeholders can convey their problems to the tea board through the app. They can share documents or photos to corroborate their appeal. Such requests will be addressed by the field officers and experts and solutions will be shared through the app," the official added.

Green leaf can be bought and sold by factories and tea growers through the app. The factories shall buy green leaf from small tea growers by scanning the QR codes from the ID card provided to the growers. The details such as name, area of the produce, quantity of leaf sold/purchased, date and time of purchase and other details shall be recorded/automatically updated in the app. The factories can provide comments on the leaf quality on its arrival at the factory. "Tea board experts will be able to provide information in advance to growers/tea estates to undertake verification on schemes/licensing activities," he said.

The tea board's field officers will also be able to view the supply of green leaf factory wise for a particular day and the price paid thereof along with the quality of the produce supplied by the growers/received by the factories.