

# COLOMBO TEA TRADERS' ASSOCIATION

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**CIRCULAR NO. 12 OF 2025**

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**TO: CEOs of All Sellers and Brokers**

## **Standardization of QR Code Stickers on Tea Packaging – Compliance under By-law 5**

This Circular is issued in continuation of **CTTA Circular No. 32 of 2017**, dated **29th November 2017**, which mandates the following:

"All invoice numbers shall be printed on approved packaging with food-grade ink. Lots of teas that are identified by handwritten invoice numbers or with stickers displaying the invoice numbers shall not be permitted to be catalogued for sale. Brokers shall decline acceptance of any tea submitted for sale through the auction or by private treaty, in the event of non-compliance with the foregoing directives."

### **Observation & Industry Feedback:**

It has recently been observed that some Sellers are affixing **QR Code stickers** on tea sacks submitted for sale via auction. These QR codes contain vital information including but not limited to:

- Estate Garden Mark
- Invoice Number
- Tea Grade
- Number of Packages
- Nett and Gross Weight
- Manufacturer's Registration Number
- Elevation

While this method enables quick electronic data capture and enhances traceability, there have been concerns regarding **non-uniform placement** and potential **obstruction of printed mandatory details**.

### **Directive for Standardization:**

In view of the above, and recognizing the benefits of QR Code usage, the CTTA, in consultation with stakeholders, hereby **approves** the use of QR Code Stickers, subject to the following mandatory guidelines:

1. **Placement Location:**  
QR Code stickers **must be affixed to the left or right gusset (side panel)** of each sack, in a manner that does **not obstruct** key printed information (e.g. Garden Mark, Invoice No., Grade, Number of Packages, Weights, Manufacturer's Registration No., Elevation).
2. **Packaging Design Update:**  
Sack manufacturers will be advised to **print a designated square area** on the gusset for QR sticker placement, ensuring uniformity across the industry.

3. **Compliance Requirement:**

All Sellers and Manufacturers are **required to strictly adhere** to these standardized guidelines. Non-compliance will result in the rejection of lots at the point of cataloguing, as per prevailing regulations.

The **introduction of QR Code Stickers** represents a valuable step toward the digital transformation of our industry, offering real-time data access while preserving regulatory compliance.

**Effective Date:**

This Circular comes into effect **immediately** and must be fully complied with for all teas submitted for auction or private treaty.

**Office of the CTTA**  
**Colombo Tea Traders Association**