



FAIR TRADE CERTIFIED™

FAIR TRADE TEA GARDEN PROFILE

Oothu, India



About the Garden

Date Established: 1965

Number of Teaworkers: 788

Annual Production: 594,000 kg

About the Tea

Elevation: 1,160 m

Type of Production: 100% certified organic and biodynamic

Land Under Cultivation: 312 hectares

Tea Type: Orthodox Black, Black CTC, Green

Tea Grades: Black-FOP, Pekoe, BOPT, Dust, FD; Green-Fines, FOP, BOPF, Dust

Export Channel: Bombay Burmah Trading Corporation, Ltd.

"We are very proud of the contribution Fair Trade is making in our community.

We hope more people will drink our organic Fair Trade tea so that our communities continue to benefit."

— Kailani,

Oothu tea plucker for 36 years

Situated at the southern end of the Western Ghat mountain range, just 40 miles from the southern tip of India, the Oothu Tea Garden is one of the most isolated in the country. Oothu [pronounced OO-too] is surrounded on all sides by pristine tropical rainforest that hosts a rich diversity of wildlife, including endangered tigers and lion-tailed macaques. Jungle corridors among the tea fields have been carefully preserved in order to maintain this rare natural ecosystem.

A pioneer in sustainable tea production, Oothu was the first tea garden in India to adapt biodynamic principles, in the 1970s. It was also among the first in the country to become organic certified in 1992, and Fair Trade Certified in 1995. Today, Oothu teas are 100% certified Fair Trade, organic and biodynamic, and the tea garden is the largest organic tea producer in the world.

To date, the tea worker community has collectively decided to invest their Fair Trade earnings in a retirement fund, an essential service in a country with scant financial resources for the elderly. More than \$20,000 has already been allocated to retired workers in the form of cashable National Savings Certificates.

In the near future, the tea workers will be broadening their investments from Fair Trade earnings to include:

- College scholarships for the children of tea workers who wish to continue their education.
- A life insurance fund for families of tea workers.
- Monthly financial assistance for families with handicapped children.