



## **UTZ CERTIFIED launches Code of Conduct for responsible tea production and partners with the Ethical Tea Partnership**

**Amsterdam/London** - UTZ CERTIFIED is proud to announce the official launch of its Code of Conduct for responsible tea production and the certification of the first tea producers. UTZ CERTIFIED has also entered into an agreement with the Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP) to streamline efforts and maximize benefits for producers.

The UTZ CERTIFIED Code of Conduct for Tea has been tested in a series of pilot projects in Indonesia and Malawi over a period of 12 months. Feedback from these projects and from stakeholders in many other producing countries has provided input for the final version. The Code consists of two parts: one for farms and one for factories. This way specific labor, quality and environmental issues in factories are also explicitly addressed.

Three estates of the Indonesian PTPN VIII group have now been certified, making them the first UTZ CERTIFIED tea estates. In Malawi the first certificates were issued this week.

As a direct result of the implementation of the UTZ Code, producers in the pilot projects have improved their environmental and social practices (such as abandoning the use of crop protection products near streams, and better health and safety conditions for their workers). Additionally, the overall management capacity of the producers has improved through structural changes in the area of documentation and accountability, increasing professionalism on the estates.

In its new generation Codes of Conduct, UTZ CERTIFIED pioneers a stepwise certification approach, whereby producers are certified based on an annually increasing number of requirements. This ensures an achievable entry level against a lower up-front investment and then a clear growth path towards full compliance, taking care at all times to include core environmental and social criteria, for instance in the area of child labor and deforestation.

UTZ CERTIFIED offers an inclusive and integrated program. To support estates and smallholders in reaching certification, it works closely with its strategic partner Solidaridad. As a development organisation with a long track record in sustainable trade, Solidaridad helps producers to translate the concept of certification into reality and to obtain certification. The tea pilots were realised with the generous support of the Douwe Egberts Foundation.

The first reactions from producers are encouraging. David Saywood, General Manager at Nchima Estates in Malawi comments: "UTZ has reinforced an understanding between the company, the staff and the community that we need to build a sustainable future. I am impressed with the progressive nature of the UTZ process."



In a bid to ease the burden on producers in origin, UTZ CERTIFIED has entered into an agreement with the Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP), an established alliance of international tea packers who share a vision for a thriving industry that is socially just and environmentally sustainable.

Given the overlap in the criteria required by the ETP and those stipulated in the UTZ Code of Conduct, estates who become UTZ CERTIFIED will no longer require ETP monitoring. This move will help streamline the certification process for tea estates and increase the speed at which certified tea enters the market. It will also enable the ETP to concentrate its resources on producers that are not currently being monitored by certification programs. The ETP will assist monitored producers that decide to work towards UTZ certification.





"Our association with ETP has helped us to understand what is required by certification bodies like UTZ CERTIFIED. Consequently we were better prepared for monitoring and understand the long term benefits to PTPN VIII," affirmed Mr Budi Frihartanto, Manager Tea Quality for PTPN VIII.

Daan de Vries, Program Manager Tea at UTZ CERTIFIED concludes, "We are honored to work in collaboration with the ETP to implement our integrated certification and traceability program for responsible tea production in a way that is beneficial to everyone. We hope that together with existing and new partners, we can improve tea production economics and circumstances to benefit all those involved."

In the next few months, work will continue on the supply chain rules for UTZ CERTIFIED tea, determining for instance how companies along the supply chain need to handle the certified tea and when the UTZ CERTIFIED label can be used on consumer products.

The first UTZ CERTIFIED tea is expected on the market early 2010. Discussions with buyers are currently taking place, whilst Sara Lee (Pickwick) and Ahold have already committed to buying UTZ CERTIFIED tea.

#### **About UTZ CERTIFIED**

UTZ CERTIFIED *Good Inside* is dedicated to creating an open and transparent marketplace for agricultural products. Founded in 2002, UTZ CERTIFIED has been an innovative pioneer in the field of certification and traceability of coffee supply chains. Based on this success, it is developing sustainability models for other sectors, such as cocoa, tea and palm oil.

As an independent international non-profit organization, UTZ CERTIFIED is a credible instrument for farmers, cooperatives and producer groups to show that their coffee, cocoa and tea is produced in a professional way with socially and environmentally appropriate growing practices and efficient farm management. In addition it provides brands and retailers with a tool to incorporate and credibly demonstrate responsible sourcing practices.

UTZ CERTIFIED is an associate member of the ISEAL Alliance. For more information visit [www.utzcertified.org](http://www.utzcertified.org).

#### **About Ethical Tea Partnership**

The Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP) is an international non-competitive alliance of 20 tea packers who share a vision of a thriving industry that is socially just and environmentally sustainable. ETP members range from major multi-nationals, whose brands are found in most kitchens and supermarkets, to privately owned specialists producing 'boutique' blends. Together they cover 50 brands which are on sale in over 100 countries. As well as organizing its own monitoring of estates, ETP works with certification programs operating in the tea sector to facilitate third-party certification where this is of interest to producers and ETP members. It is active in all major tea producing regions. ETP is a not-for-profit organization funded by contributions from members and participation in the ETP monitoring program is free to producers. For more information visit [www.ethicalteapartnership.org](http://www.ethicalteapartnership.org).

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