

Climate Change and Tea

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

The short version: Heat, drought and erratic rain are reshaping where and how tea grows. The calm, dated picture, what it means for your cup, and the sensible response.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

Tea is one of the more climate-exposed everyday crops. This sits in the climate-and-cost cluster beside [why tea costs more](#).

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in April 2026.

Market and climate information based on public reporting, accurate as of May 2026; figures are estimates and change. Not financial advice.

The picture, in one place

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The picture, in one place, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

Question	The answer
The core problem	tea wants stable temperature and reliable rain; heat, drought and erratic monsoons cut yield and shift flavour
The scale	bad years can cut yields by up to ~30%; a large share of current tea land could be stressed by ~2050
Where it bites	Assam and the rest of India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, where millions of livelihoods depend on the crop
On your shelf	not empty shelves but price rises, smaller packs, fewer offers and quality risk at the cheap end
The response	calm, informed buying and support for transparent, climate-investing supply chains

The core problem

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The core problem, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

Tea is a climate-exposed crop, grown overwhelmingly in a handful of regions and harvested as repeated flushes that depend on stable temperature and reliable rainfall, exactly what heat extremes, drought and erratic monsoons attack. Public reporting points to bad-year yield losses of up to around thirty per cent in affected areas, India's output fell meaningfully in 2024, and longer-range projections suggest a large share of today's tea land could be stressed or unsuitable by about 2050. The pressure is hardest in Assam and the rest of India, in Kenya and in Sri Lanka. It is gradual rather than overnight, and it stacks with non-weather pressures, freight, energy, labour and packaging inflation and trade-policy shocks such as new tariffs. See [tea and drought](#) and [the future of tea](#).

How it shows on your shelf

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

It does not mean imminent empty shelves. Global supply is diversified and UK demand is gently declining, so the pressure surfaces as higher prices, smaller packs, fewer promotions and quality risk at the very cheap end rather than scarcity, which is why stockpiling a product that stales is the wrong move. The era of ever-cheaper tea is structurally over, and the cost lands unevenly: the cheapest blends defend their price by quietly adjusting sourcing and quality, while transparent and premium teas pass it through more openly. See [why tea costs more](#).

The livelihoods dimension

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The livelihoods dimension, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

There is a real human dimension too. Assam and Kenyan tea support very large workforces, so origin stress is a livelihoods crisis as much as a market one. Supporting transparent, fair-paying, climate-investing supply chains is, in practice, the single most useful thing a buyer can do about it. See [the Assam crisis](#) and [Kenya and climate](#).

The flavour effect

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The flavour effect, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

Stress years also subtly change leaf chemistry, so a familiar blend can shift in character as well as price. A consistency you have relied on for years can drift a little as growers cope with harder seasons, which is an underappreciated part of the story rather than your imagination. See [taste changes](#).

The response

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The response, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

The rational response is calm and undramatic. Keep buying the tea you enjoy, but judge it by cost per cup rather than pack price, lean toward loose leaf and sensible bulk where it genuinely saves and re-steeps,

expect gradual shifts in both price and character, and treat any tea-apocalypse framing with scepticism. The realistic future is different and dearer tea, shifting origins, more premium and functional formats and gentle blend tweaks, not the disappearance of tea. Calm, informed buying is both the sensible response to the economics and, through support for transparent supply chains, the most constructive one. See [is tea sustainable](#).

Want to actually buy a good one?

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Want to actually buy a good one?, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

If this has helped you decide, the next step is buying a genuinely good one judged on the cup rather than the marketing. The products shown on this page are matched to exactly this topic, so they are the starting point. To see the wider range, browse [tea and herbal infusions at teas.co.uk](#) or the full [tea shop](#). As everywhere on this wiki: buy on the cup and the description, never the marketing, check the per-cup price, and remember free UK delivery is over £35.

[Browse the tea range](#)

Reference noted

- [Encyclopaedia Britannica: Tea \(cultivation and trade\)](#)

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

FROM THE CURATOR *teas* · Try the cheapest plain version of the style first. Upgrade only after you've decided you like the style.

More tea reading

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for More tea reading, Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/>*

- [Why tea costs more](#)
- [The Assam crisis](#)
- [The future of tea](#)
- [Is tea sustainable](#)

More from the tea wiki

- [Green tea](#)
- [Black tea](#)
- [Oolong tea](#)
- [White tea](#)
- [Herbal tea](#)
- [Caffeine in tea](#)
- [How to make tea properly](#)
- [Loose leaf vs teabag](#)

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Climate Change and Tea. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/climate-change-and-tea/*

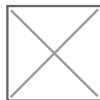
Earn rewards on Teas.co.uk

Earn loyalty points on every order. Free to join.

+100 pts

Create your free account

Welcome bonus + earn on every order.



100 pts = 1 tree

Plant a tree in Scotland

Pledge points to our reforestation partner.

