

Newsletter n°2

Association Tea Grown in Europe (EuT)

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<http://tea-grown-in-europe.eu>

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Association General Assembly meeting

The 1st General Assembly meeting of the Association has taken place on 26th May 2017 at the Trébihan tea garden situated in Languidic, Brittany region, France. A tea plucking activity was scheduled in the initial agenda; however, as the tea plants had not fully recovered from a period of frost in April, the activity was cancelled.

All members were present; the activity report presented by the President was unanimously approved, as well as the 2017-2018 action plan; some key actions are listed hereafter:

- Enlarge the Association to new Members,
- Enhance the visibility of the EuT label,
- Improve the website presentation and enrich its content,
- Present the Association to European and national / local authorities,
- Present the Association to Academic organisations,
- Participate to at least one international event,
- Investigate grant opportunities (at European and national / local levels),
- Organise a study trip for the Members in October / November 2018.

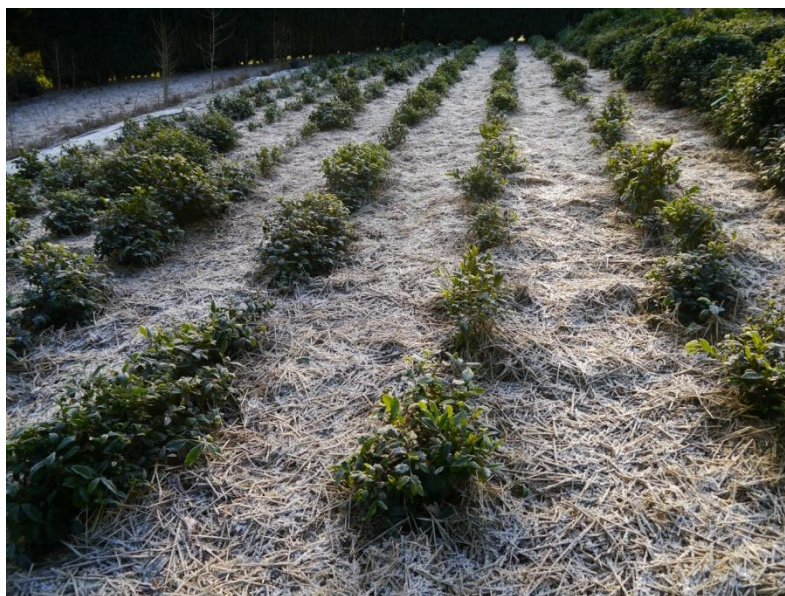
New Member: Tschanara Tea Garden



Jointly run by Ms Haeng Ok Kim and her husband, Mr Wolfgang Bucher, the Tschanara Tea Garden is located near Odenthal, North Rhine-Westphalia region, Germany.

Haeng Ok and Wolfgang have been collecting *Camellia sinensis* seeds from many regions across the world since 1994 and have constituted an exceptional tea plants collection originating from these seeds, probably one of the

most important in Europe; it includes varieties from Korea, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Azores, Turkey, India, Sikkim, Nepal etc. Some of these varieties being not adapted to the local climate, they are grown in greenhouse, such as the magnificent *Camellia sinensis* var. *pubilimba* grown from seeds acquired from Viet Nam (see picture hereunder left).



Haeng Ok and Wolfgang have started the plantation in Odenthal in 1999 and, since 2002, have developed processes for making high quality green, and also, a bit later, wulong and black tea. They have been focusing on the selection of the best varieties / cultivars adapted to the region and presenting the most interesting flavours. In particular, as temperatures in winter may go down to -10°C, plants have to resist to frost (see picture here above right); also, branches have to be strong and flexible enough to support the weight of snow. Thanks to the genetic variations obtained through seedlings, after 18 years of efforts, their plantation appears healthy and vigorous, well adapted to the local climate. Impressive!



This experimental phase has reached a successful end: Haeng Ok and Wolfgang will soon extend their plantation up to around 2200 m² (and may be more in the future) in view of commercial production.



Thus, animated by the passion of tea combined with a very rational approach, the development of Tschanara Tea Garden has been very successful. We had the opportunity to test some of the teas manufactured this year and were amazed by the quality and the specificity of their aroma. Haeng Ok and Wolfgang have indeed developed one of the most impressive know-how in Europe on *Camellia sinensis* growing and tea leaves processing. The Association addresses them a warm welcome and wishes them all the best for their future high grade tea production!



Website of the Tschanara Tea Garden: <http://tschanara-teagarden.de/>

Event: European tea testing by Experts of the TeeGschwendner company



9th July 2017 was a great date for the European tea! Three professional tea testing experts from the German tea trading company TeeGschwendner have tested around 20 different samples of European tea from the Tschanara Tea Garden.

After a tea plucking and processing session in the Beautiful Tschanara Tea Garden, testing was organised in two rounds, the first one dedicated to green tea, the second one dedicated to wulong (semi-oxidised) and black (fully-oxidised) teas.



An impressive set of specific tea testing cups were aligned in a row, then, 2.2 grams was carefully weighted from each tea sample, then infused in the cups during exactly 5 minutes; the liquid coming from each sample was then poured in individual cups allowing to observe and smell the leaves on one side and to taste the liquid on the other side.



The interesting point of this tea testing was that each sample came from individual *Camellia sinensis* bushes, providing a very interesting comparison of the tea obtained from the different varieties / cultivars. We have even tested a tea made exclusively from the rare pink flower plant (*Camellia sinensis* 'rosea', also known by its Japanese name "benibana-cha"). As far as we know, this is the first time that such a comprehensive testing was performed with European tea. As a result, the experts confirmed some initial feelings about the tea bushes which were considered as the most adequate for green tea; also, there were some good surprises, such the strong floral aroma of the wulong tea produced from other varieties.



We believe that such event has a very strong impact on the future of European tea. Growing and processing tea in Europe is a long term project: several years are needed from planting the first bushes to producing the first tea samples. These experiments will help tea growers to orient their production and link to the market. Our Association will foster the organisation of such events in the future, including testing of teas grown in different regions in Europe, highlighting the specificity of each European “terroir”.



Website of the TeeGschwendner company: <https://www.teegschwendner.de/>