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Tetley – about us

Tetley history

In 1837, brothers Joseph and Edward Tetley started to sell tea, and soon became so successful they formed a partnership with Joseph Ackland in 1856. Thus was born "Joseph Tetley & Company, Wholesale Tea Dealers". With ambitions beyond tea wholesaling, the company began concocting its own original tea blends, and packaging them using its own distinctive designs. This pioneering instinct continued when, in the 1880s, Joseph Tetley & Company began selling tea in the USA. There, those working for the company also chanced upon a curious device made from silk muslin, one which promised to speed up the tea-making process. It was called the tea bag.

Yet it was not until 1953, just after rationing finished, that Tetley launched the tea bag in the UK. Gone was the silk muslin, but not the convenience. And that explains tea bags' runaway success. Within 10 years, the multi-holed sachets had revolutionised the way Britons drank their tea. The traditional tea pot was consigned to the niche preserve of tea enthusiasts.

The company's tireless devotion to enhancing the tea-drinking experience has not stopped since. Proof comes in the circular form of the round tea bag. Most people drink tea from a round mug, went the thinking, so the very sensible conclusion was that the bag should be made round too. More recently, the same pragmatic approach produced the acclaimed Tetley Drawstring 'No drip, no mess' tea bag and the much loved Extra Strong tea. Today, that same spirit of enhancing the tea drinking experience lives on, in the guise of Tetley's elaborate range of Decaf, Organic, Green, Redbush, Fruit & Herbal, Speciality and Iced teas.

Tetley around the world

Tetley is the number one brand in both the UK and Canada, number two in Australia and three in the US. It sells a range of more than 60 branded teas to more than 40 countries.

The Tetley Group's international product portfolio includes Good Earth Teas, a specialty tea brand in the USA, and JEMČA, the market-leader in the Czech Republic which sells black, green and herbal teas alongside fruit infusions. Tetley also has a stake in a South African tea company, Joekels Tea Packers, which sells black and redbush tea.

The Tetley Group is headquartered in Greenford, West London (UK), but also has offices in Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, South Africa and the USA.

Running Tetley responsibly

Tetley recognise that everything they do and the way they do it affects people, communities and the environment.

As a result of this approach and commitment, Tetley have a growing programme of local and global activities dealing with a range of ethical, social and environmental issues.

Managing our ethical impacts

The living and working conditions of people on the tea estate are important to Tetley. The ETP has been established for 9 years and is a non commercial alliance of major tea companies who work together to promote social responsibility in the tea trade worldwide and ensure the ethical sourcing of tea.

Katy Tubb, chair of ETP says, 'Tetley were one of the founding members of the Partnership and I, personally, have represented Tetley at ETP since the very idea of such an organisation began over 12 years ago. It has been quite a journey and I am very proud of what we have achieved, but more excited by our plans for the future. The ETP is an important aspect of the way we do business here at Tetley'

ETP uses independent monitors to check that tea estates comply with local laws and union agreements and international standards in employment, maternity, housing, health and safety, education, and basic rights. So next time you buy tea, make sure it is 'ethical' tea.

Managing our environmental impacts

Tetley has mapped and evaluated its environmental impacts and documented and published the Tetley Environment Policy focusing on energy and waste management.

Tetley has developed an Environmental Management System for all its UK sites which is certified to the environmental standard ISO 14001. This provides a rigorous framework to help us achieve our objectives and continually improve our environment performance.

Managing our social impacts

Tetley engages with various communities through their 'Support for Others' programme. This features a variety of activities worldwide. Here in the UK Tetley are helping to raise funds through on pack donation and sponsorship of the British Heart Foundation. Since Tetley started supporting the British Heart Foundation they have raised over £1 million. As the largest single importer of tea from Malawi, one of the world's poorest countries, Tetley annually commit resources to give at least 10,000 villagers in the tea growing regions there, access to clean water and improved sanitation and hygiene.

www.tetley.co.uk

www.tetley.com

www.teaexperts.co.uk

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