

**Title** Effect of storage period and natural additive Qare-Qat on tea quality  
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**Citation** ISHS Acta Horticulturae 804:139-144. 2008.  
**Keywords** tea; storage period; Qare-Qat; natural additive

### **Abstract**

Iranian tea industry is facing problems in the market. Low quality of Iranian black tea and change in sense of consumers taste is one of the reasons. Various teas are produced to attract consumer opinion. Using permissible additives is not usual in Iranian tea industry (before packaging). One of the natural additives of black tea is Qare-Qat (*Vaccinium arctostaphylos* L.), which was evaluated in this experiment. The experiment was carried out by using a Split-Plot design with two factors in three replications. Storage period was distributed in four levels (0, 2, 4 and 6 months) in main plots and added Qare-Qat fruit amount in subplots in four levels (0, 5, 10 and 15%). Qualitative traits of tea including sensory tests (as made tea appearance, color, perfume, and flavor of tea beverage), total color (TC) and brightness (B) of tea and chemical tests (theaflavin (TF), and thearubigin (TR) content) were studied. Chemical tests results showed that tea + 5 and 10% Qare-Qat fruits treatments had more TF, B and TF/TR ratio than control (pure tea) and this difference was significant at 1% level. However, taste tests did not reveal significant difference between control and tea + Qare-Qat blends.