



For tea connoisseurs, the nearly 200 years old Assam variant has a special place that very little else can compete with. From vouching for its health benefits for being packed with antioxidants and minerals that help fight fat, strengthen the immune and digestive systems, as well as keep the heart healthy, those who enjoy their tea can never get enough of the earthy malty flavour of Assam tea. It owes its unique flavour to the place and climate of its origin. From the soil quality to the perfect blend of temperature, rain and farming techniques, it is a delicate balance of natural and man-made factors that give Assam tea its rich aroma and taste. It is this very balance that is under threat now. India is the world's largest tea-drinking nation and Assam is the country's largest tea producing State. It accounts for roughly 52 percent of the country's tea production and 13 percent of the world's tea. The State is home to around 800 organized tea-estates collectively producing 630-700 million kgs of tea, according to the official data. However rising temperatures and extreme weather events are affecting both the quality and quantity of Assam tea. According to the Centre for Science and Environment Report, "Climate India 2023: An assessment of extreme weather events", between January 1 and September 30, 2023, Assam reported 48029 hectares of crop area damage. In June alone, 10592 hectares of crop area were affected in Assam. In August, when India experienced heavy rains, floods and landslides, Assam was the worst hit with extreme weather events on 28 days of the month. The impact of extreme weather events is reflected in the decline in tea production. According to the data from the Tea Board in Assam, production volumes decreased to 99-78 million kilograms (mkgs) in August 2023 as against 109-81 mkgs in August 2022. A drop of 9%. This shows that climate change in Assam is hugely impacting the State's tea industry.

Answer: Assam tea, renowned for its earthy malty flavor and health benefits, holds a special place among tea connoisseurs. Its unique taste stems from the perfect blend of natural and human factors, including soil quality, climate, and farming techniques. However, Assam's tea industry, contributing 52% of India's production, faces threats from climate change. Rising



temperatures and extreme weather have significantly impacted tea quality and yield. In 2023, extreme weather events damaged 48,029 hectares of crops in Assam, leading to a 9% decline in tea production from August 2022 to August 2023, highlighting the severity of climate change on Assam's tea industry.