

GUIDELINE ON

Tea Products



We are committed to more sustainable tea cultivation and pursue the goal of improving the social, ecological and economic conditions in the production countries. This is why our purchasing activities focus on more sustainable tea products in order to influence the sustainable development of tea cultivation.



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I. UNDERSTANDING AND SCOPE

As a leading international trading and travel and tourism company, REWE Group is aware of its special role as an intermediary between manufacturers, service providers and consumers. The production of REWE Group private label products has an impact on people, animals and the environment. REWE Group's customers expect and should be able to trust that REWE Group, as a trading company, is aware of its responsibility in the supply chains of its store brands and addresses the effects. In its "Guideline for Sustainable Business Practices", REWE Group acknowledges its environmental and social corporate responsibility. The values described therein form the foundation for the responsible actions of the company (REWE Group 2011).

The present guideline specifies the requirements and measures of REWE Group for more sustainable tea products.

REWE Group offers a diverse range of private label tea products in its REWE and PENNY stores. With this guideline, REWE Group aims to raise awareness among its employees and partners in the tea supply chain and illustrate its measures and goals in order to contribute to an improvement of the social, ecological and economic conditions in tea cultivation. The present guideline defines a binding framework for REWE Group's actions and its business relationships with contractual partners. Defined requirements and targets are consistently reviewed, and new measures and targets are agreed as required. In addition, the guideline is updated on the basis of current trends and developments.

The scope of the guideline covers all private label tea products of REWE Group, which are sold in Germany by REWE and PENNY. On the basis of the systematic sustainability commitment described here, REWE Group's own PRO PLANET label can be awarded to the corresponding products.



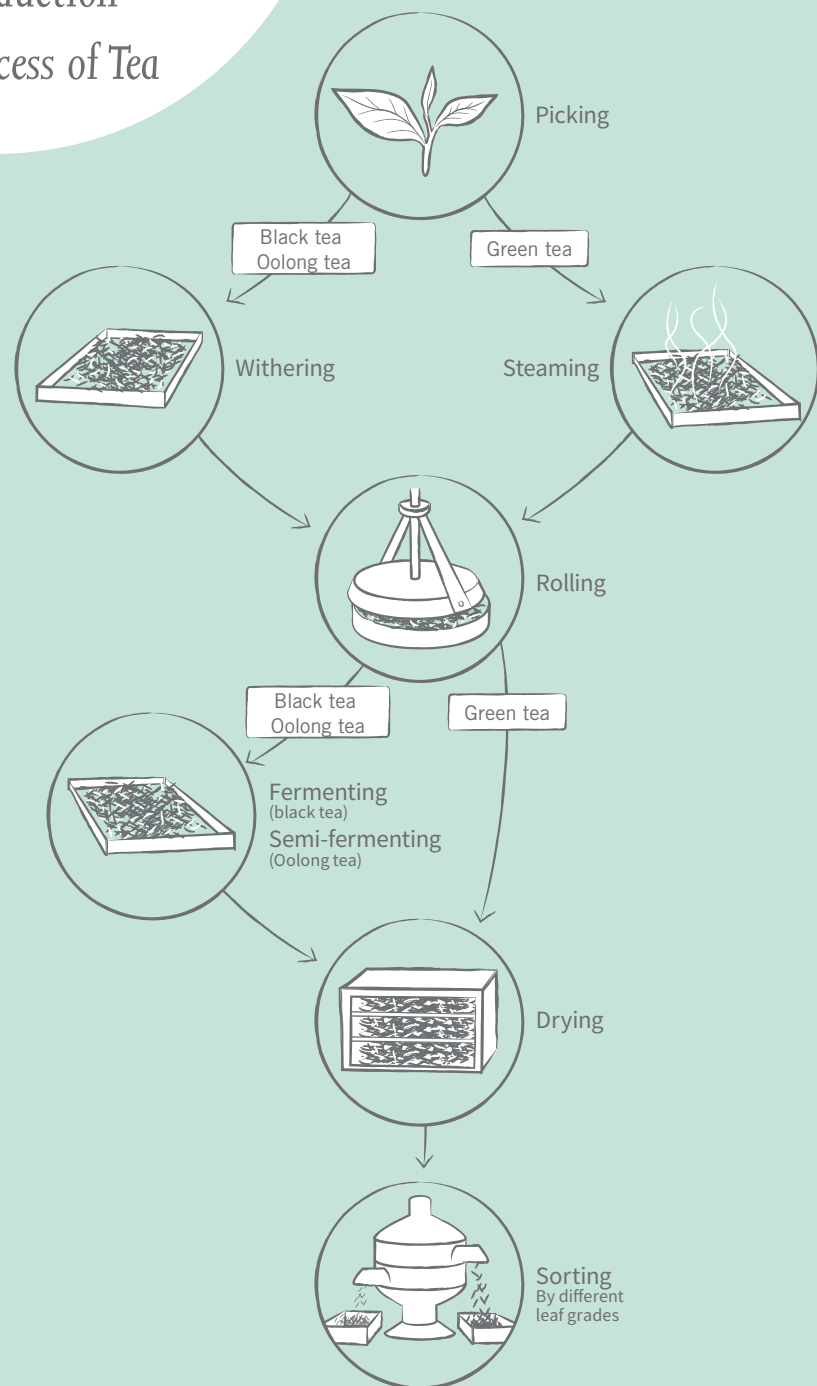
II. ISSUES IN THE VALUE CHAIN OF TEA PRODUCTS

Tea is the second most consumed drink in the world after water. On average, every German drinks around 26 litres of black and green tea per year (Deutscher Teeverband, 2018a: 3 f). Herbal and fruit tea are even more popular among Germans. Every German consumes an average of around 40 litres of herbal and fruit tea per year (Wirtschaftsvereinigung Kräuter- und Fruchtee, 2016). Tea is cultivated in around 80 countries. With an estimated proportion of 38 per cent, China is the largest producer of tea worldwide (Mukho- padhyay & Mondal, 2017).

Tea products contain a broad range of different ingredients. Black and green tea are obtained exclusively from the leaves, the leaf buds and delicate stems of the tea shrub *Camellia sinensis*. Herbal and fruit tea, however, are produced from various plant parts that do not originate from *Camellia sinensis*: roots, leaves, blossoms or fruits (Verbraucherzentrale, o. J.).

Black and green tea: Depending on the species, the tea shrub can be cultivated in temperate or tropical climates. Harvest time depends on the geographic location. In temperate climates, tea is harvested from spring to autumn,

Production Process of Tea



while in areas near the equator, tea can be harvested all year round (Deutscher Teeverband, 2012: 5; Steinecke, 2012: 214). Tea shrubs are cultivated on plantations as well as by smallholders. Worldwide, up to 15 million people are employed in the tea cultivation and processing sector (Solidaridad, 2018). Tea cultivation is a very labour-intensive form of agriculture, as the tea leaves are picked individually by hand. In order to avoid a decline in quality, the initial processing of the tea leaves must take place within five to seven hours after the harvest. On large plantations, the tea leaves are processed on-site, while smallholders sell their tea or deliver it to factories. Following the initial processing, the tea is auctioned and transported.

In further processing steps, the tea is blended (Solidaridad, 2018). From the perspective of sustainability, tea blending is a critical step, as it means fragmentation and thus an increase in the complexity of the supply chain, making traceability to the place of origin more difficult in many cases.

Herbal and fruit tea: The ingredients of herbal and fruit tea originate from different countries. A lack of information regarding the origin of the raw products (and thus a lack of transparency and traceability) makes it difficult to effectively counteract social and ecological challenges.

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Origin of
different
ingredients

Coriander
Egypt, Black Sea region
Morocco, USA

Aronia berries
Eastern North America

Lemon grass
India, Sri Lanka,
Mainland Southeast Asia,
China, England, Africa,
Central and South America

Verbena
Argentina, Peru and Chile

Lapacho
South America

Sage
Mediterranean region, Europe

Lemon balm
Eastern Mediterranean
region, Western Asia

Bergamot
Southern Italy

Ginger
Nigeria, China, worldwide

Hibiscus
Tropical and warmer
regions of the world

Rooibos
South Africa

Fennel
Europe, parts of Africa,
Asia and South America

Camomile
Southern and Eastern Europe

Licorice
Europe

Anise
Southern Russia

Ginseng
Everywhere

Ginkgo
Everywhere

Rose hip
Temperate climate zones
of Europe and Asia

Green tea
China, Indonesia, Japan

Black tea
India (Darjeeling, Assam),
Sri Lanka, Kenya

Caraway
Egypt, Netherlands,
Eastern Europe

Cardamom
Indian subcontinent
and Sri Lanka

Cinnamon
Sri Lanka

Vanilla
Madagascar

Tea cultivation faces different challenges: Changing weather conditions as a result of climate change pose a threat to tea plantations, and fluctuating tea prices on the world market are putting pressure on the income and wages of smallholders and plantation workers. The following section illustrates in parts the most crucial issues, in particular with regard to tea cultivation:

2.1 People

Poverty of Smallholders and Plantation Workers

A large part of the tea is produced by smallholders. However, they receive only a small proportion of the sales revenue since the greatest value is mostly created during further processing and export. In addition, smallholders usually do not have the necessary expertise to produce high-quality tea and thus to obtain a reasonable price.

Due to falling tea prices, workers' wages are also under pressure. Even though minimum wages are provided for by law in many production countries, they are not paid unconditionally. Moreover, short-term employment complicates the enforcement of minimum wages (Misereor, 2014a: 2). Minimum wages for workers guaranteed by certifications do not always correspond to the current price level, so that the coverage of basic needs is not guaranteed (Oxfam, 2013: 5). In some cases, workers are even at risk of malnutrition (Oxfam, 2019: 13). Accommodation is also often insufficient (McLennan, 2011).

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Precarious Working Conditions and Human Rights Violations

In tea cultivation and initial processing of all types of tea, employees often do not receive any employment contracts - this is particularly the case with seasonal workers in tea cultivation. This means that they have no social or employment security (ILO, 2016: 35).

Legal working hours vary depending on the country of production: In the core regions such as Kenya, India, Malawi, Sri Lanka and China, employees often work (unpaid) overtime, and working hours are frequently more than ten hours a day (Misereor, 2014a: 3).

In many production countries, the right to freedom of association is severely restricted, and tea estates and factories often lack collective representations in the form of unions or labour organisations. While unions have become increasingly established in recent years, they have often been met with brutal repression by the police and plantation owners (Ethical Trading Initiative, 2017; McLennan, 2011).

It is mainly women who work in the particularly poorly paid and labour-intensive areas of tea harvesting. Violation of women's rights on plantations presents an everyday problem. Due to the accommodation situation, women have little or no privacy and are often victims of sexual assaults - domestic or alcohol-related violence against women is not uncommon (Oxfam, 2019: 22 f). In addition, women suffer from lack of equality. They are often denied access to land rights, loans or memberships in cooperatives (Roy, 2017; Solidaridad, 2018).

There are repeated reports of child labour on the plantations or in factories. This issue is closely related to the prevailing poverty, as parents rely on the additional income of their children (LeBaron, 2018).

Lack of Health and Safety Standards

The use of outdated machinery for the treatment with pesticides as well as lacking or insufficient protective clothing lead to lasting health problems. In addition, there are problems with the drinking water supply and lacking access to sanitary facilities. Water shortage causes hygiene problems. Due to the poor quality of the drinking water, diseases such as jaundice, cholera and typhoid often break out. The lack of access to sanitary facilities creates further health risks (Oxfam, 2019: 17 f).

2.2 Environment

Deforestation

In order to supply the increasing demand for tea, new cultivation areas must be constantly exploited - often in ecologically very sensitive regions. Grasslands and forests must give way to monocultures. Animals and plants are losing their habitat, biodiversity is declining, and entire ecosystems are at risk (Solidaridad, 2018). Furthermore, the deforestation of valuable rainforest destroys natural storage for greenhouse gases, which in turn will aggravate the global climate change (Mukhopadhyay & Mondal, 2017).

Agricultural Chemicals

Monocultures provide ideal living conditions for pests. This makes the widespread use of chemical plant protection products necessary (SWR, 2012; McLennan, 2011). The associated loss of biodiversity often leads to nutrient-poor soils, which in turn are countered with the use of fertilizers. These seep into the soil, pollute the groundwater and cause further soil degradation. As a common result, even more agricultural chemicals are used - a vicious cycle for soil fertility (Solidaridad, 2018).

Emissions

Drying tea is a very energy-intensive procedure - the energy consumption per kilogram of produced tea corresponds approximately to the production of the same amount of steel. Wood is often used as combustible, which releases CO₂ and thus contributes to the climate change.

In order to obtain the necessary firewood, more rainforest is being cleared. But also fossil sources of energy that produce greenhouse gases and pollute the environment are used for the drying process (Mukhopadhyay & Mondal, 2017: 2).



III. APPROACH OF REWE GROUP FOR CREATING MORE SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS

Through a clear strategic commitment and appropriate measures, REWE Group aims to actively contribute to reducing and resolving social and ecological impacts of tea production.

Sustainability is firmly anchored in REWE Group's corporate strategy. For REWE Group, this means: Promoting more sustainable product ranges and ensuring fair treatment of partners and suppliers, acting in an environmentally and climate-conscious manner, assuming responsibility for its employees and taking responsibility for contributing to a sustainable society.

The "Green Products" pillar bundles all activities aimed at making purchasing and production processes more sustainable and thus expanding more sustainable product ranges. The activities of REWE Group are broken down into three fields of action:

- People
- Animals
- Environment

REWE Group has developed an approach for responsible supply chains in order to identify, evaluate and process the effects of private label products on people, animals and the environment:

1. Risk analyses: REWE Group constantly assesses sustainability risks and opportunities. On the one hand, these analyses are based on external evaluations of product areas, specific products or raw material supply chains. On the other hand, the assessment and experience of the independent expert advisory board for sustainability as well as other stakeholders such as producers, suppliers and also employees are included.

2. Derivation of focus topics and goals: On the basis of the risk analyses carried out, focus raw materials and focus topics as well as goals and measures were defined, which are adapted and scrutinised when new results or findings emerge.

3. Definition and implementation of measures: Measures to achieve the goals and work on the focus raw materials and focus topics are defined and implemented on three different management levels.

3.1. Internal cooperation: By raising internal awareness and providing training, continuously analysing risks and opportunities and formulating strategies and goals, REWE Group continues to integrate sustainable procurement into its purchasing processes with the aim of taking sustainability aspects into account in every supplier and/or product decision.

3.2. Cooperation within the supply chain: REWE Group follows a three-step approach in its cooperation with parties involved in the supply chain, which includes the definition of requirements, control and development of suppliers and supply chains.

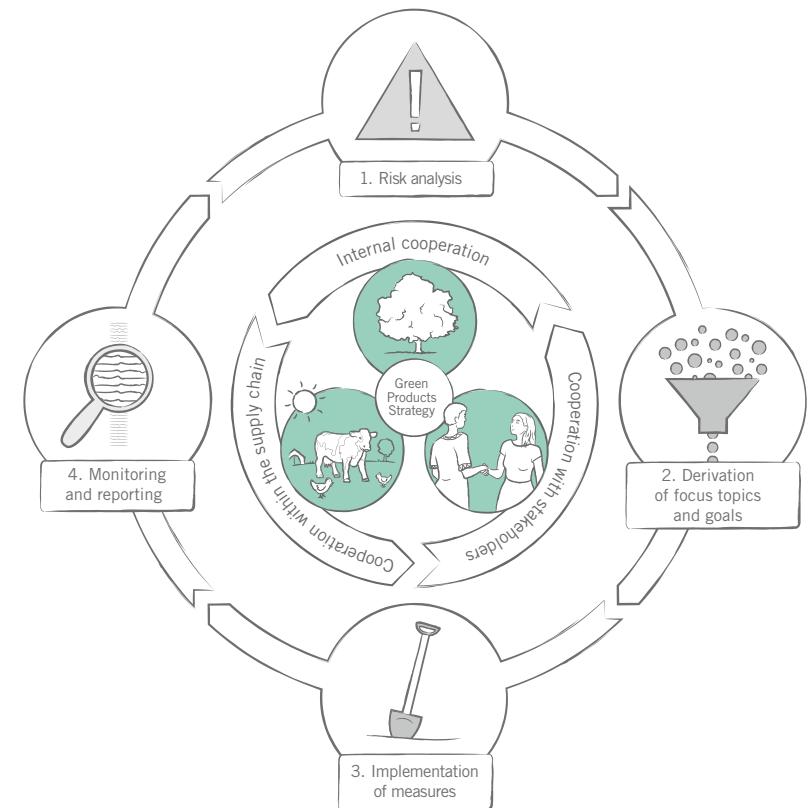
- a. All business partners in the supply chains of REWE Group's private labels are obliged to indicate the production sites in which the products are manufactured for REWE Group.
- b. By raising the contract partners' awareness and holding them accountable, concrete rules are set to implement sustainability throughout the supply chain.
- c. Training courses support suppliers and producers in implementing REWE Group's requirements and continuously improving their performance. In various projects, REWE Group works directly with producers of raw material to face the challenges together.

In addition, transparency and the integration of sustainability are promoted as part of the supplier evaluation. Work in the supply chain also includes the establishment of effective complaint mechanisms.

3.3. Cooperation with stakeholders: In the long term, sustainability along the supply chain can only be achieved through cooperation with all relevant stakeholders. REWE Group is in continuous contact with many stakeholders and is involved in various national and international initiatives, alliances and forums. Key elements include participation in external events, industry initiatives,

partnerships, commitment to the further development of sustainability standards and the monitoring of relevant developments at political and regulatory level.

4. Monitoring and reporting: All activities carried out are monitored and evaluated. The findings of the monitoring are incorporated into the further development of the measures.





REWE Group cooperates with various certification systems in the tea sector.

Fairtrade: The Fairtrade label stands for improved working and living conditions for farmers and employees in agricultural production in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Compliance with international standards is monitored by independent bodies. Fixed minimum prices and premiums for joint projects should offer farmers and employees greater planning security and create fair trading conditions. Child labour and forced labour are prohibited. Comprehensive environmental criteria include cultivation guidelines, waste and water management, as well as measures to protect the climate and biodiversity. Deforestation and the use of genetically modified plants are prohibited. In addition, Fairtrade promotes organic farming and has the most comprehensive list of banned conventional pesticides. The Fairtrade producer networks advise and train local producers and implement projects.

Rainforest Alliance/UTZ: The organisation works at the interface between business, agriculture and forestry to meet social and environmental challenges. The power of the markets is used to make supply chains more sustainable. Producers can achieve a higher price by selling certified products.

Rainforest Alliance focuses on environmental aspects as well as social criteria. The emphasis is on preserving biodiversity and securing a sustainable livelihood by changing land use practices and business practices. Responsible entrepreneurial action and value-oriented consumer behaviour are further key topics.

UEBT/UTZ: The programme of UTZ and the Union for Ethical BiTrade (UEBT) focusses on herbal and fruit tea. The certification programme is intended to protect biological diversity and promote quality standards.

At the same time, it aims to improve the rights and working conditions of farmers and workers in order to create a better future.

EU organic logo: The logo identifies products from organic agriculture that have been produced in accordance with the guidelines of the EU Eco-Regulation. Organic agriculture refrains from using chemical synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, among other things, in order to promote the preservation of biodiversity and protect the climate. The rules cover cultivation and processing as well as trade, and compliance is verified by regular checks.

Naturland: The organic cultivation association Naturland defines strict guidelines for the cultivation of organic food for its members. These guidelines focus on a holistic approach, sustainable management, nature and climate protection in practice, securing and preserving soil, air and water as well as consumer protection. With its guidelines, Naturland also covers areas that are not regulated by the EU organic logo - this includes for example ecological forest use, the manufacture of textiles and cosmetics or social aspects. The association operates internationally and promotes organic farming worldwide.

PRO PLANET: With the PRO PLANET label, REWE Group has developed a reliable guidance for consumers. Besides tea, the label is used for other products and specifies in concrete terms the social or ecological added value offered by the respective product. As part of its commitment to sustainability, REWE Group awards the PRO PLANET label with the aim of analysing and systematically reducing problems in the value chain. A clearly regulated awarding process, accompanied by an independent Sustainability Advisory Board, ensures that the PRO PLANET label stands for effective improvements. Thus, the PRO PLANET label enables a purchase decision based on comprehensive information and helps to promote more sustainable consumption across the board.

IV. REQUIREMENTS AND MEASURES

REWE Group has laid down the basic values that apply to all business relations with REWE Group's contractual partners in its Guideline for Sustainable Business Practices. This includes respect for human rights, labour and social standards, environmental protection and animal welfare. With the requirements described below, REWE Group specifies the basic principles for tea production of private labels set out in this guideline.

4.1 People

REWE Group is committed to ensuring that tea products in its product ranges are manufactured in compliance with human rights and recognised labour and social standards. All business partners in the supply chain for private labels are contractually obliged to comply with the minimum requirements such as internationally and nationally applicable laws and the core labour standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and to commit themselves to the Guideline for Sustainable Business Practices. REWE Group's suppliers are obliged to guarantee compliance with the core principles also along their supply chain and to prove this by means of certifications by Fairtrade, UEBT/UTZ, Rainforest Alliance/UTZ or Naturland¹. The certification systems comprise in particular the following principles:

- Wages must comply at least with national or regional applicable minimum wages.
- Provision of safe and clean accommodation.
- Conclusion of employment contracts for staff employed for at least three months

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- Compliance with national laws, limitation to a maximum of 48 working hours per week, permission of overtime work only in verifiable exceptions.
- Educational programmes to support farmers to operate more sustainably and effectively.
- Ban on exploitative child labour.
- Ban on forced labour.
- Equal participation of men and women and the prohibition of discrimination. The recommended measures include advanced training opportunities, access to hygiene articles and initiatives for financial independence for women.
- Protection of workers' health and safety. Suitable protective clothing must be worn. Tea farmers must offer their employees trainings on the correct and safe use of pesticides, with special focus on the reduction of the use of pesticides.

¹ In accordance with the objectives defined in chapter V.



4.2 Environment

The protection of natural resources and biodiversity is an important concern of REWE Group. For this reason, it is also committed to environmentally-friendly and resource-preserving production conditions in its supply chains. This means that REWE Group business partners are required to use resources such as energy, chemicals or water efficiently and to minimise emissions.

All companies in the supply chain of private labels are obliged to meet the minimum requirements of generally recognised environmental protection standards and internationally and nationally applicable laws within the individual production stages. In addition, they must also ensure compliance with the standards along their supply chain and prove this by means of certifications such as Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance/UTZ, Naturland or the EU organic logo². The certification systems comprise in particular the following principles:

- Protect biodiversity, improve soil fertility and prevent soil erosion.
- Prevent pests and plant diseases instead of pesticide control. In organic farming, there is an explicit list of active substances approved for plant protection.
- Implementation of climate protection projects, such as the conversion to renewable energies and the reduction of greenhouse gases.

V. OBJECTIVES

REWE Group has set itself ambitious objectives for the implementation of the defined measures. These give REWE Group's commitment a clear orientation and are subject to a continuous progress review. REWE Group has set itself the following objectives for the implementation of these measures:

Objective 1: Certified Tea³. Purchasing certified raw materials is an important contribution to promoting a more sustainable tea sector. Therefore, REWE Group has set itself the following objectives in terms of certification:

Objective 1.1: With immediate effect, 100 per cent of the black, green and rooibos tea products shall contain 100 per cent certified raw ingredients.

Objective 1.2: By the end of 2025, 100 per cent of the herbal and fruit tea products must contain at least 30 per cent certified raw ingredients. The long-term objective is to continuously increase the proportion of certified raw ingredients per tea product.

Objective 2: Transparency in the supply chain. REWE Group strives to increase transparency and traceability in the tea supply chain and to make information about the origin of tea products visible to its customers in the future.

VI. REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION

REWE Group is convinced that transparency and the provision of comprehensive information are important components of successful sustainability management and can also contribute to the promotion of ecological and social aspects in the tea supply chain. REWE Group reports regularly and publicly on the progress and obstacles in implementing the measures and achieving the goals outlined. This is done through press releases, via the REWE Group website or via the sustainability report of the Group. REWE Group also runs communication campaigns for its customers in order to raise their awareness for more sustainable tea cultivation.

² In accordance with the objectives defined in chapter V.

³ The scope covers all private label tea bag articles that are sold in Germany by REWE and PENNY.

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The dialogue on the topic of tea is of great importance to us. Please contact us with suggestions and questions at: nachhaltigkeit@rewe-group.com

As of: October 2019