

FIRSD TEA NORTH AMERICA

China Tea Export and US Tea Import Report

May 2026

Report Date: July 8, 2026

Executive Summary

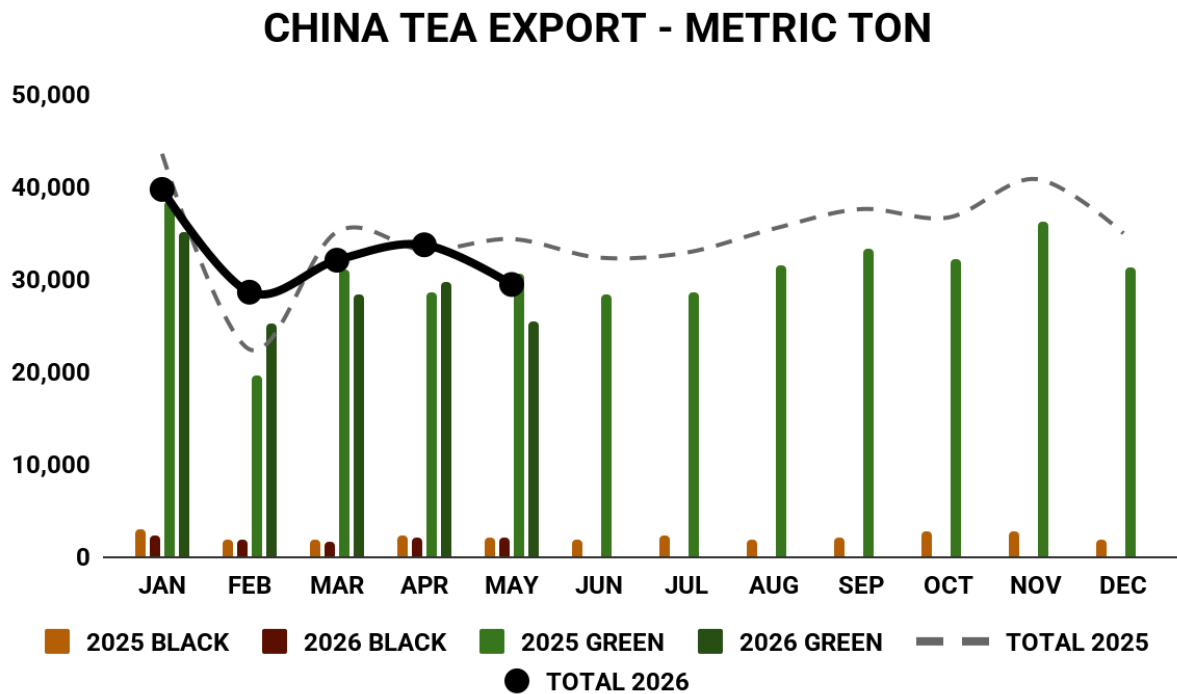
China's May 2026 tea exports totaled 29.4 million kg, down 14.3 percent compared with May 2025. Most notably, US imports of Chinese green tea surged 74.2 percent in volume and 150.5 percent in value during the same period.

Average pricing for US Chinese green tea imports rose from \$4.96 per kg in May 2025 to \$7.13 per kg in May 2026, representing a 43.8 percent increase. The bulk green category surged 308.6 percent in value. Organic green tea imports jumped 142.7 percent in quantity.

Key Finding: Value Growth (150.5 percent) exceeded volume growth (74.2 percent) by 76.3 percentage points, suggesting a significant shift toward higher-value products or premium pricing.

1. Market Overview

1.1 China Exports (May 2026)



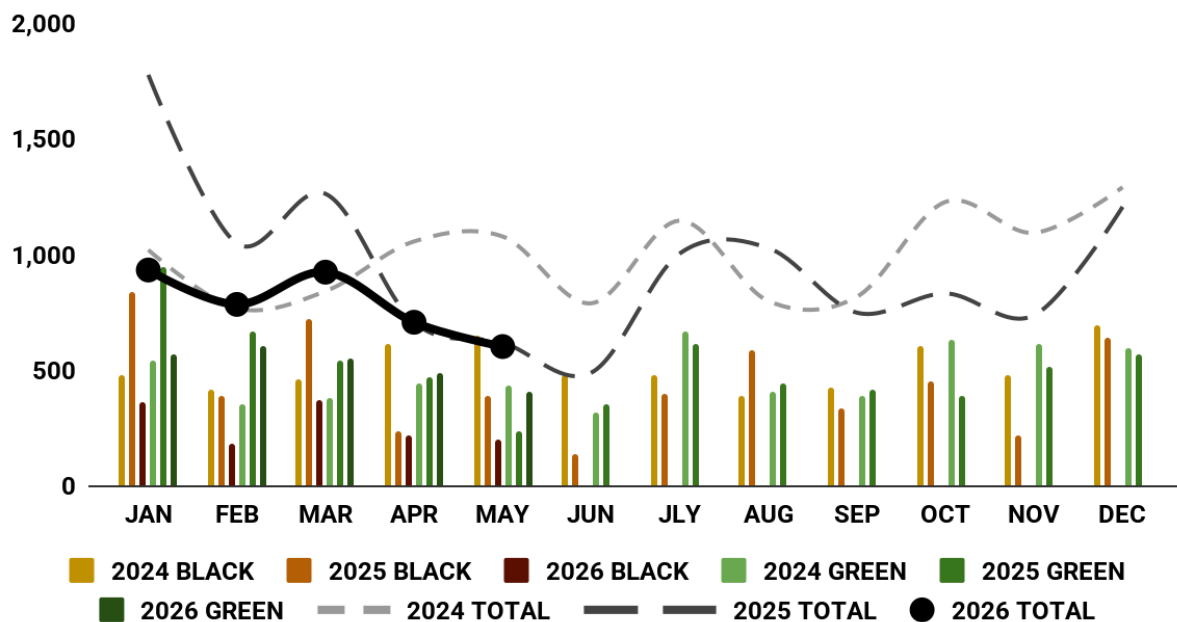
China's May 2026 tea exports totaled 29.4 million kilograms, representing a 14.3 percent decline from May 2025 (34.3 million kg). Green tea maintained dominance at 25.4 million kg, down 16.7 percent year-over-year. Black tea recovered slightly to 2.1 million kg, up 7.3 percent from the prior year.

Average export pricing across all tea categories increased to \$3.84 per kg in May 2026, compared with \$3.61 per kg in May 2025 (6.4 percent increase).

Category	May 2025 (Kg)	May 2026 (Kg)	Change
Total	34,301,000	29,387,000	-14.3%
Green	30,469,000	25,366,000	-16.7%
Black	1,976,000	2,121,000	+7.3%

1.2 US Imports (May 2026)

US TEA IMPORTS (HS 0902) FROM CHINA, METRIC TONS



US tea imports in May 2026 reached 9,845 metric tons, down 2.1 percent from the prior year. Chinese green tea imports surged 74.2 percent in volume to 405.7 metric tons. Chinese black tea fell 49.0 percent to 194.6 metric tons. Organic green tea from China jumped 142.7 percent to 98.3 metric tons.

2. Chinese Green Tea Value Analysis

The most significant development in May 2026 was the dramatic value increase in US imports of Chinese green tea. Total value surged 150.5 percent to \$2.893 million, while quantity increased 74.2 percent to 405.7 metric tons. This divergence indicates a substantial shift in product mix, quality tier, or unit pricing.

2.1 Product-Level Breakdown

Bulk green tea (GR TEA NF OT) showed the strongest growth, with value increasing 308.6 percent and volume more than doubling. Small-package green tea surged in both quantity (55.7 percent) and value (154.0 percent). Regular green tea achieved an average price of \$7.02 per kg in May 2026, up from \$4.03 per kg in May 2025.

3. Strategic Implications

The 43.8 percent increase in unit value for US Chinese green tea imports suggests one or more of the following: (1) shift to higher-quality organic and specialty products, and (2) reduced availability of lower-cost green tea. This tends to agree with recent developments in demand for organic matcha, and the shifts in organic green tea production to account for this increased demand.

Conclusion

May 2026 marked a significant inflection point in US imports of Chinese green tea, characterized by both volume recovery and substantial price appreciation. The shift toward premium products and higher unit values suggests China's positioning as a matcha powerhouse, and rising demand for organic Chinese matcha.