

ACDI/VOCA Beneficiaries Brew Success in Coffee Contest

In the 2nd annual ECafe Gold Cooperative Coffee Competition in Ethiopia, ACDI/VOCA-assisted cooperatives once again scored highly. All but one of the winning coffees originated from one of the four coffee unions ACDI/VOCA helped build under the Agricultural Cooperatives in Ethiopia (ACE) project. During the February 25 ceremony in Addis Ababa, awards were presented to coffee cooperatives for 27 washed and sun-dried coffees of exemplary quality. A panel of professional cuppers from North and Central America, Europe and Ethiopia judged the competition. Coffees of over 65 cooperatives from five unions were represented in the competition.

Willem Boot, co-founder of ECafe Foundation, which organized the competition together with ACDI/VOCA, explained the background of the competition, stating that Ethiopian coffee unions exemplify the three core values of ECafe: full traceability, sustainability, and, “last but not least, quality, which is the best guarantee for success in the international marketplace.” For the second year in a row, the highest-scoring finalist coffee in the washed category was the coffee submitted by Kello Cooperative of the Yirgacheffe Union.

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—Willem Boot,
Co-founder, ECafe Foundation

Particularly unique to this auction were the 15 specially selected and processed unwashed varieties from the Yirgacheffe, Jimma and Sidamo regions. “This second ECafe Gold competition has again proven that natural coffees from Ethiopia present exemplary flavor profiles rarely found in other coffee origins,” commented Willem Boot. In the sun-dried (unwashed) category, the Yirgacheffe coffee entered by the Hama Cooperative of the Yirgacheffe Union took the award.

These winning coffees were selected from 31 washed and 35 sun-dried coffees during an initial round of judging in a national competition. In total the competition involved a total of 2,300 cups of coffee, 21 cuppers, five roasters, five inspectors and samplers and 10 pickers, to ensure that all coffees participating in the competition were Grade 1 and that the winners were worthy of being submitted to the internet auction. “Farmers, cooperatives, and unions have appreciated the significant importance of quality,” said ACDI/VOCA-Ethiopia Country Director Werqu Mekasha. “And consumers, roasters and importers are for the first time assured that these high-quality coffees are traceable to their origin at the cooperative level.” The ceremony concluded with remarks on behalf of the state minister for marketing, congratulating the winning cooperatives and thanking ECafe, the international judges and ACDI/VOCA.

The 27 winning coffees, of which 17 lots are certified organic or certified Fair Trade organic, will be marketed internationally at the 2nd ECafe Gold Internet Coffee Auction on May 24, 2006. During the first internet auction of Ethiopian coffee in 2005, in which the 26 winners of last year’s cooperative competition were marketed, the average price obtained was \$3.22 per lb. (\$7.08 per kg), with the highest at \$6.50 per lb. (\$14.30 per kg).

Top Washed Coffees

Rank	Producer	Score
1	Kello of Yirgacheffe	90.6
2	Watahara of Sidama	90.1
3	Gerbicho Lela of Sidama	88.2
4	Halona Gelma of Sidama	87.7
5	Nurakurate of Sidama	87.1
6	Shilcho of Sidama	86.5
7	Titira of Sidama	86.2
8	Hafursa of Yirgacheffe	86.2
9	Bokaso of Sidama	86.1
10	Wicho of Sidama	85.8
11	Bale Kara of Yirgacheffe	85.3
12	Tigil Fire of Tepi Union	85.2

Top Sun-dried Coffees

Rank	Producer	Score
1	Hama from Yirgacheffe	92.5
2	Kenteri from Oromia (Jimma type)	91.3
3	Shanta Goba from Sidama	91.0
4	Wotona Bultuma from Sidama	90.8
5	Shilcho from Sidama	90.3
6	Konga from Yirgacheffe	90.1
7	Titira from Sidama	89.8
8	Gerbicho Lela from Sidama	89.6
9	Adado from Yirgacheffe	89.6
10	Kampi from Oromia	88.1
11	Setamo from Sidama	88.0
12	Kello from Yirgacheffe	87.9
13	Bale Kara from Yirgacheffe	87.2
14	Michiti from Kafa	86.7
15	Seneso from Oromia	85.1