



FAIR TRADE CERTIFIED™

FAIR TRADE COFFEE COOPERATIVE PROFILE

GUATEMALA



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ASOBAGRI, Guatemala



About the Co-op

Date Established: 1989

Number of Members: 746

Annual Production: 20 containers

About the Coffee

Varieties: Typica, Caturra, Bourbon

Elevation: 1,200m - 1,600m

Processing: Wet processing, sun drying

Bean Characteristics: SHB, XHB, HB

Cup Characteristics: Mild acidity, excellent body, good aroma

Harvest/Export Season: Nov-Apr/
Feb-May

Organic Production: 85%

Organic Certification Agency: OCIA

Shade Trees: Plantain, ingas, guava, banana

Located in the Huehuetenango region of Guatemala, ASOBAGRI was founded in 1989 by 20 K'anjob'al Mayan coffee and cardamom farmers. At a time when political violence scared many small farmers away from organizing themselves, the cooperative grew throughout the 1990s as farmers saw the value of community organization. ASOBAGRI and its members are strongly committed to organic production of the highest quality.

Since 1999, ASOBAGRI has sold much of its coffee to the Fair Trade market in the United States. The premiums ASOBAGRI receives from Fair Trade coffee production have begun to make a significant difference in the standard of living for member families. Cooperative revenues have been used to:

- Fund technical assistance in quality improvements and organic agriculture for sustainable coffee production
- Diversify crops by also growing cardamom
- Provide members with basic training in organizational management and operations
- Organize literacy programs for community members
- Fund credit programs for women's groups

"At ASOBAGRI we follow organic production methods and we produce good coffee. We implement a number of different organic techniques that include weeding four times a year, building natural barriers and terraces, and using organic fertilizers."

Evelio Saucedo, ASOBAGRI member

"Without Fair Trade ASOBAGRI would not exist. The extra income from selling to the Fair Trade market allows a small producer to send his kids to school and his wife to a doctor."

Manrique López Castillo, Manager of ASOBAGRI



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FEDECOCAGUA, Guatemala



About the Co-op

Date Established: 1969

Number of Members: 20,000

Annual Production: 520 containers

About the Coffee

Varieties: Bourbon

Elevation: 600m - 2,000m

Processing: Wet processing, patio drying

Bean Characteristics: SHB, HB

Cup Characteristics: Typical gourmet Guatemalan

Harvest/Export Season: Nov-May

Organic Production: none

Organic Certification Agency:
Certification by Naturland in process

Shade Grown: 100%

Established in 1969, FEDECOCAGUA is a cooperative organization with 20,000 members. Seventy percent of the co-op members are indigenous people from different regions of Guatemala, including Huehuetenango, Cobán, Verapaces, Retalhuleu, San Marcos, and Zacapa.

FEDECOCAGUA's coffee is shade-grown under a wide variety of trees, including cocoa, banana, mango, and plantain.

In 1999, after Hurricane Mitch, FEDECOCAGUA channelled donations from different international organizations to benefit the whole co-op. These funds made possible the reconstruction of FEDECOCAGUA's cooperative school, several processing plants and coffee farms, as well as local roads and bridges that were seriously damaged by the hurricane.

FEDECOCAGUA has lent its support to the "María Auxiliadora Weavers Club", a group of 25 women weavers who have exported their colorful handmade products (bags, placemats and napkins) to Germany, benefiting more than 125 children from Patzún, Chimaltenango.

With proceeds from the Fair Trade premium, the co-op was able to buy new trucks which helped to reduce transportation costs involved in coffee production. Some of FEDECOCAGUA's communities have been able to establish health care centers and pharmacies to meet the health care needs of local families.

" . . . Prior to Fair Trade we did not have any chance to survive, now we see the light at the end of the tunnel."
Marcos M. Pérez, member, FEDECOCAGUA



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GUAYA'B, Guatemala



About the Co-op

Date Established: 1992

Number of Members: 284

Annual Production: 10 containers conventional, 1 container organic

About the Coffee

Varieties: Caturra, Tipica, Bourbon, Catuai

Elevation: 1,000m - 1,600m

Processing: Wet processing, sun drying

Bean Characteristics: SHB

Cup Characteristics: Strong acidity, marked body and flavor

Harvest/Export Season: Nov-Mar/Feb-Jul

Organic Production: 33%

Organic Certification Agency: Mayacert, BCS Oko Garantie

Shade Grown: In process of being 100% certified

The GUAYA'B Association is a cooperative of 284 small coffee farmers in the mountainous Guatemalan state of Huehutenango. In the 1980's, this indigenous Mayan community was ravaged by the military-led Guatemalan civil war, and the area's economy was destroyed. Many inhabitants migrated to the Guatemalan coast to work for the owners of huge estates.

In 1992, however, a number of small family farmers of the Maya-Popti' indigenous group united to take control of the production and export of their coffee crops. By forming a cooperative, the "Asociacion Guaya'b," the farmers hoped to make coffee farming sustainable and profitable for the community.

In the year 2000, GUAYA'B started selling its coffee to Fair Trade importers. With the Fair Trade premium, the GUAYA'B farmers have not only increased their own earnings, but have also been able to reinvest a portion of their profits in the community. As a result, the region's economy is more stable and the rate of migration has decreased.

The cooperative supports:

- A credit program
- A women's weaving project
- An appliance distribution program

Today the Association exports more than half of its production at Fair Trade prices to Europe and the US.



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La Voz que Clama, Guatemala



About the Co-op

Date Established: 1977

Number of Members: 116

Annual Production: 8 containers

About the Coffee

Varieties: Caturra, Tipica, Bourbon, Catuai

Elevation: 1,500m - 1,650m

Processing: Wet processing, sun drying

Cup Characteristics: Good balance of acidity and body with a spicy, fruity flavor

Harvest/Export Season: Nov-Mar

Organic Production: 100%

Organic Certification Agency: QAI/OCIA

Certified Shade Grown: 100%

In 1977, the men and women of San Juan de La Laguna's Tzutuñil indigenous community in the western highlands of Guatemala decided something needed to be done to improve the economic and social conditions of their people. As a result they formed La Voz, a coffee cooperative dedicated to improving the community as a whole. Today, La Voz que Clama en el Desierto (The Voice that Cries Out in the Desert) is a collectively managed organization of 116 coffee producers representing approximately 600 family members.

Certified organic since 1992, La Voz's arabica trees are cultivated under a rich shade tree canopy that provides home to a number of migratory bird species. The coffee is grown in the region's fertile volcanic soils, and the region is known to produce some of the best and most distinctively flavored coffees in the world.

With higher incomes gained through the Fair Trade market, farmers and their co-op have been able to:

- Invest in education by donating money and supplies to local schools. In a community where the vast majority of people have no education beyond elementary school, all co-op members have been able to send their children to elementary and secondary school.
- Expand and improve facilities at their processing plant. The premiums received from organic coffee sales have enabled co-op members to build their own wet mill and upgrade their patio drying facilities, thereby eliminating dependency on outside facilities.
- Invest in their land. With increased incomes, farmers have started building terraces, planting shade trees, following organic standards, and diversifying their crops.
- Receive training and technical assistance. The co-op currently employs one agricultural promoter who advises producers on quality issues.

"With the extra income earned from coffee sales to the Fair Trade market we are working on coffee quality, credit, training, and education. We are very fortunate. The Fair Trade price has given us hope."

Benjamin Cholotio, General Manager of La Voz



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Manos Campesinas, Guatemala



About the Co-op

Date Established: 1997

Number of Members: 1,073

Annual Production: 20 containers

About the Coffee

Varieties: Caturra, Bourbon, Catuai

Elevation: 1,200m - 1,800m

Processing: Wet processing, sun drying

Bean Characteristics: SHB, HB

Cup Characteristics: Varies depending upon altitude

Harvest/Export Season: Nov-Apr/
Feb-Jul

Organic Production: 25%

Organic Certification Agency: Mayacert, BCS Oko Garantie

Shade Trees: Platain, avocado, banana, citrus

Manos Campesinas, Sociedad Civil de Pequeños Productores de Café, is an organization of small coffee producers from the regions of Quetzaltenango, San Marcos and Solola in southwestern Guatemala. Founded in 1997, the co-op was initially formed by six organizations with a total of 620 members.

By participating in Fair Trade, members have helped to strengthen their local community. They earn enough to keep their land and continue growing coffee rather than switching to a different crop. The stable income provided by Fair Trade has helped keep families together by drastically reducing farmer migration to México.

In 1997, Manos became certified to start selling its coffee to the Dutch Fair Trade market. Today, 40% of the co-op's production is sold at a Fair Trade price to importers in Europe and the United States. The income from these sales has enabled the cooperative to:

- Install wet and dry processing plants
- Purchase more land to build a warehouse
- Repair processing equipment
- Improve their communication systems

At Manos, women participate actively and have organized several income-generating projects. Women's groups exist in each one of the six organizations. One of these groups, Mundo Verde (Green World), roasts and sells its own Green World coffee to local markets.

"With the Fair Trade premium we have been able to send our children to school."

Juan de Dios Perez, a member of Manos Campesinas