

PRODUCER PROFILE

Name: Yirgacheffe Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union

Product: Coffee

Country: Ethiopia

FLO ID: 2520

Fairtrade Certified Since: 2008

Number of Certified Members: 45,036



Introduction

Yirgacheffe Coffee Farmers Cooperatives Union (YCFCU), currently represents over 45,000 farmers belonging to more than 300,000 families, and was established in June 2002. Its 27 member cooperatives are all located in Gedeo, southern Ethiopia. From the total member cooperatives 25 of them with 36,074 (18% female) coffee farmers are Fairtrade certified and selling their coffee under Fairtrade market. This area is well known by high quality Yirgacheffe coffee type in the world.

The 37,810 hectares gardens that are dedicated to coffee alone, on average produce 20,000 tons of Yirgacheffe washed and sun dried coffee per year.

Yirgacheffe coffee, growing 1600 to 2440 meters above sea level in fertile loamy soil, is the world's finest highland-grown Ethiopia Arabica coffee. Most of members own 0.65 to 1.5 hectares of coffee land which they cultivate together with other crops such as false banana which is used for entire production system as garden production system.

Coffee Growing & Processing

The production practices of all member farmers are 100% organic. Gedeo people, an ethnic group known for their mixed agriculture practice which has been in place for centuries and on the verge to certify this practice as world heritage in UNESCO, are keen for organic by-product to fertilize their coffee. Mid-September to end of January is harvest season of coffee in Yirgacheffe area. At primary cooperative level red cherry is delivered by the individual members to their respective primary cooperative's processing stations and temporary buying/collection sites. When the red cherry from the temporary buying

stations is delivered to the central washing stations it is reweighed before processing can begin. Once coffee has undergone the wet processing or sun drying process, the parchment is weighed and taken to the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX) for grading. It is then transported to Addis Ababa to the final processing warehouse owned by the union. On arrival at the central warehouse, the union coffee is labelled and stored separately for traceability. A sample is drawn from the coffee and sent to different buyers. If the buyer approves the samples, a contract is signed between the union and the

buyer. The buyer opens the letter of credit and sends the shipping instructions to the union. Based on the shipping instructions, the coffee is further processed for export and checked by the relevant government unit if it is fit for export. If it is deemed fit, the coffee is directly transported to Djibouti port for shipment.

Coffee Profile



Altitude:
1600-2440 mm



Smallholders Production Area:
0.66 ha averagely



Growing Practice:
100% Organic



Area of Production:
23,809 ha



Harvest Period:
September-January



Processing Type:
Fully washed | Dried



Other Certifications:
Organic BCS & RA



Coffee Production:

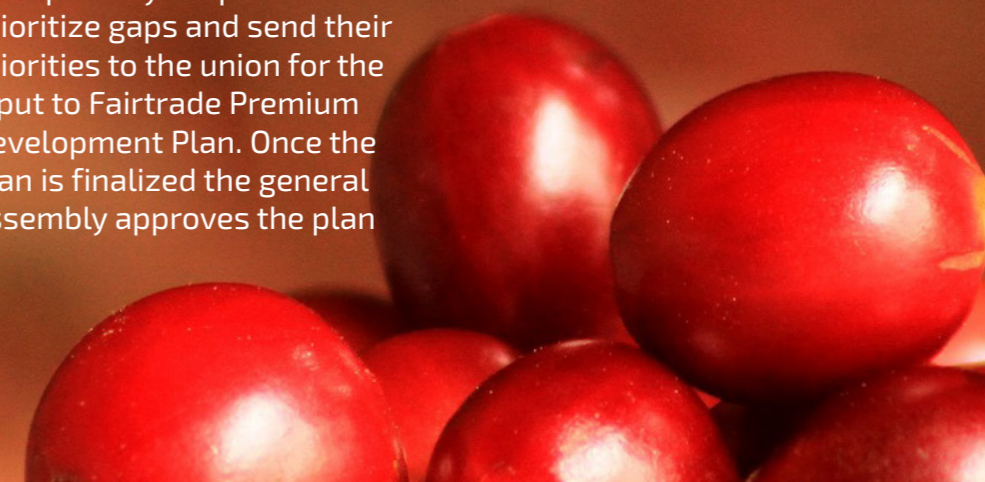
Type: Red Cherry
Transporation: International market through Djibouti

Benefits of Fairtrade

Yirgachaffe organizational structure is as per Co-operative Societies Proclamation. A General Assembly is held at least once a year. Each of the primary co-operatives affiliated to the Union delegates 4 representatives to the General Assembly where the chairperson to the Board, secretary to the Board and Control Committee board chairman are automatic delegates. The fourth delegate is elected by the General Assembly of the respective primary cooperatives. Members of these committees are elected for a period of 3 years and not more than 2

consecutive terms. Decisions are taken by the General Assembly of member primary cooperatives by majority vote. Since 2008 the union is collecting significant amount of Fairtrade premium from the Fairtrade sales. The union annually do gap analysis at the community level and based on the gap each primary cooperative prioritize gaps and send their priorities to the union for the input to Fairtrade Premium Development Plan. Once the plan is finalized the general assembly approves the plan

and implementation will go on. More than 30 premium projects implemented and about 26,022 coffee farmers and community members are directly benefited from the projects.



Social Projects

Social projects like elementary school, additional classroom, library, laboratory & pedagogical centre construction; rural road, simple bridges construction, Clean water line extension, Spring development, electricity installation and extension to the coffee farmers and market centres which allows members do other business apart from farming to achieve living income are implemented and benefited significant amount of community members.

The implemented social projects played significant role in creating access to quality education, access to road, access to clean water and income diversification of the coffee farmers.

Quality

In terms improving coffee quality, productivity and sustainability the union is providing trainings to its member farmers and staffs using premium on: Good Agricultural Practices from seed selection to harvest, Internal Management/Control System, Compost Preparation using coffee by-products, Coffee waste management. Together with other union and development partners initiatives on quality, productivity and sustainability Yirgacheffe type coffee quality is leading the international market.





Fairtrade Africa



@fairtradeafricamarketplace
marketing@fairtradeafrica.net
www.fairtradeafrica.net

Producer Organization

Yirgacheffe Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union
Erkehun Woldegiorgis
+(251) 114 717 010 | +(251) 996 779 166
erkwgis@yahoo.com
www.yirgacheffeunion.org