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Rural Producers Forecast Sharp Decline In Mexican Coffee Production For 1993

by Carlos Navarro

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On May 11, the National Confederation of Rural Producers (Confederacion Nacional de Productores Rurales, CNPR) said that continued low prices on the international market have forced producers to cut coffee production estimates for the 1992-1993 season from the original figure of five million 100-pound bags to just 3.75 million. According to Salvador Perez Martin, the CNPR's coffee producers representative, this will be the fourth year in a row with coffee production declines. He told the government news agency Notimex that coffee prices have remained depressed at about US$55 per 100 pounds. In turn, reduced income has prevented many coffee producers from acquiring needed pesticides and fertilizers, affecting production even more. Perez Martin said Mexican coffee producers are grateful for 620 million nuevo pesos (US$191.66 million) in government-granted financial support, but he added that this is not enough to solve the problems of the coffee sector. He suggested that in addition to more financing, coffee producers are calling for renegotiation of their debt obligations. According to government statistics, almost 80% of the coffee grown in Mexico is cultivated by small-scale producers on plots three hectares or smaller. (Sources: La Jornada, 05/03/93; Notimex, 05/11/93)

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