

5-21-1997

Coffee Growers Form Association to Promote Production of High-quality Beans

LADB Staff

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/sourcemex>

Recommended Citation

LADB Staff. "Coffee Growers Form Association to Promote Production of High-quality Beans." (1997).
<https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/sourcemex/3747>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in SourceMex by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.

Coffee Growers Form Association to Promote Production of High-quality Beans

by LADB Staff

Category/Department: Mexico

Published: 1997-05-21

In mid-May, a group of coffee growers announced the formation of a new organization Asociacion de Cafes de Alta Calidad (CALICAFE) to promote the production of high-quality coffee beans in Mexico. According to CALICAFE director Roberto Gisemann, the organization will promote gourmet coffee beans, which are increasingly in demand in the export market. Gisemann said a total of 10 million 60-kilogram bags of gourmet coffee beans, or about one-tenth of total world coffee production, is exported on an annual basis.

Roughly 3 million bags of that total is exported to the US market. Gisemann estimated that Mexico has the potential to devote as much as 50% of its coffee area to production of higher-quality beans, which would boost export revenues to US\$1.5 billion from the current US\$1 billion. He said only 10% of Mexico's total coffee production is of gourmet quality.

According to Gisemann, Mexico should follow the example of Guatemala, Colombia, and Costa Rica, which have succeeded in expanding their production of high-quality coffee. "In recent years, our coffee industry has focused on increasing volume and has done little to improve quality," said Gisemann. In addition, he said CALICAFE will place seek to improve Mexico's reputation as a reliable supplier of quality coffee beans. "Mexico has achieved a bad reputation on the coffee market because of its frequent violations in the terms of sales contract regarding supply and quality," he said.

As part of the new strategy, Gisemann said CALICAFE has joined the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA). Mexico is currently the fourth largest producer of coffee beans in the world, surpassed only by Brazil, Colombia, and Indonesia. In recent years, Mexican coffee production has averaged close to 5 million 60-kilogram bags annually.

Agriculture Secretariat sets ambitious production goals

According to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Labastida Ochoa, the government's goal is to double production to about 10.1 million bags by the 2000-2001 harvest, with an 8.4 million bag target by the 1999-2000 harvest. Labastida announced the targets at the annual meeting of the Consejo Mexicano del Cafe (CMC). At the meeting, he emphasized the importance of coffee exports to the Mexican economy.

According to Labastida, current production generates more than US\$700 million in profits. By increasing output to 8.4 million bags in 1999-2000, Labastida said, coffee income that year could surpass US\$1.3 billion. However, some coffee producers are skeptical about the government's targets. For example, a report from the Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Cafetaleras (CNOCA) says that the targets fail to take into account such factors as weather or the financial situation of producers. According to CNOCA general adviser Fernando Celis, even if climatic and

financial conditions are good in the next several years, Mexico's annual coffee production will still only reach about 6 million bags by the year 2000-2001. (Sources: El Economista, 04/16/97, 05/16/97; El Universal, 05/16/97)

-- End --