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Notes On Coffee Market Two Years After Collapse Of Quota System

by Barbara Khol

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Since the collapse of the International Coffee Organization (ICO) quota system on July 3, 1989, Colombia has replaced Brazil as the world's top coffee export revenue earner. The Brazilian share of the global coffee market has declined from 30 to 24% in the past two years. In the past two years, coffee prices have dropped by half, and financial losses to 50 coffee exporter nations total over $5 billion. Brazilian exports dropped from 18.513 million 60-kg. sacks in the 1989/90 crop year to 17.707 million in 1990/91. Colombian exports in the same two years totaled 25.565 million sacks, compared to 20.363 million in 1987/88 and 1988/89. Colombian financial losses in the past two years are estimated at over $500 million. Central American nations have increased exports of mild variety coffee varieties by nearly 35% since July 1989. According to the ICO, Central America exported 42.351 million sacks in 1989/90 and 1990/91, compared to 33.886 million in 1987/88 and 1988/89. In 1990/91, Honduran coffee exports totaled 1.391 million sacks. Under the quota system in 1989, that nation's exports were limited to 650,000 sacks. (Basic data from EFE, 07/03/91)

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