

KCU

KAGERA CO-OPERATIVE UNION

Exporter of
Organic fair-trade coffee in Tanzania

Kagera Co-operative Union (KCU) is based in Bukoba, Tanzania. Last year the company exported 460 tons of organic fair-trade Robusta coffee. Of this coffee, 48 tons were sent to TANICA for production of organic instant coffee.

Fair trade organisations are buyers of this coffee, and most of the organic coffee exported is sold as organic and fair trade.

The project involves approximately 3,500 farmers, who receive 50%, and higher, premiums for their organic coffee.

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Export Manager

John M. Kanjagaile

Moshi office

Kahawa House
P.O. Box 8447
Moshi, Tanzania

Tel: +255 27-2750728
Fax: +255 27-2750059
E-mail: kcu@habari.co.tz

Bukoba Contact

P.O. Box 1207
Bukoba, Tanzania

Supported by the Sida programme
– **EPOPA** – www.epopa.info
Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa

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A Win-Win Project

Kagera Co-Operative Union (KCU) participate in the EPOPA project to enhance their export of organic coffee from Bukoba in Tanzania. They get assistance in finding buyers and to get the product certified. In return they implement the project.

Target group

The direct target groups are the farmer communities in the Ibwera and Kachwezi areas, comprising of 3,500 organic smallholder farmers. The Kagera Co-operative Union, including the field staff also benefit from the project.

Expected results

By the end of May 2005,

- Annual exports 500 tons of organic certified Robusta green beans and 15 tons of instant coffee.
- 5,000 farmers receive a 20% higher income compared to conventional
- 4 groups of 40 farmers have been trained to be farmers-trainers.
- 25% of the farmers to have started to rejuvenate their farms.
- 25% of the farms have introduced and actively maintain improved organic farm practices resulting in a 20% production increase.

Profile of Kagera farmers

Land holdings are very small in the region. On average a homestead has 2.4 acres of land; of which 1.6 acres is cultivated. The age of the coffee trees is very high with the majority being over 50 years old.

The average homestead has 2.4 adults and 3.5 children. Only 9% of the sample farmers own cattle. The total income of the average homestead is approx. Tsh 320,000 (US\$ 320). The living standards of the rural farmers is quite typical with 66% living in semi permanent buildings while only one in three having access to a bicycle.



Robusta Coffe, Tanzania

(Coffea canephora)

Robusta Coffee is a bush-like tree grown in the North-Eastern part of Tanzania. The coffee grows on medium altitude (800-1500m), steady high temperatures and rainfall (1750 mm). The rainfall is well distributed throughout the year with a dry period of 2 to 3 months for the initiation of flowering.

The white, aromatic coffee blossom does not depend on cross fertilisation. The coffee fruits ripen in 6-8 months. Ripe coffee cherries have a red or yellow, sweet type of flesh. The actual coffee beans are contained within this flesh.

Robusta coffee gains 30% higher yields compared to Arabica coffee but prices of Robusta coffee are lower. The Robusta coffee is marketed from August to December.



EXPORT PROMOTION OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS FROM AFRICA

EPOPA – Development through Organic Trade

Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa (EPOPA) is a programme created by the Swedish international Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in 1994. The programme has projects present in Uganda and Tanzania.

The EPOPA programme aims to give African smallholder farmers better conditions through developing the exports of organic products from Africa. The rural communities, thus the farmers, get a premium price for their crop, they get a more transparent price setting from the exporter who buys more directly and they are paid cash in hand.

Participating countries are given the opportunity to increase and diversify their exports, while at the same time expose the agricultural sector to innovative and environmentally sound farming techniques.

The programme has since it started in 1994 proven to be a valid instrument for African exporters to improve their business and for thousands of farmers to improve their livelihood.

The execution of the EPOPA Programme is subcontracted to a consortium of two consultancies, AgroEco from the Netherlands and GroLink from Sweden. Both consultancies have great experience of working with international organic production issues worldwide.

More information

Website: www.epopa.info

E-mail: d.vanstaalduinen@agroeco.nl