

The CRS Fair Trade Coffee Project

Drink Great Coffee You Can Feel Good About

Americans spend more than \$20 billion a year to feed their coffee habit. Yet few of us know anything about where our coffee comes from or the people who grow it. CRS directly assists coffee farmers overseas and supports them by promoting Fair Trade coffee here in the United States. We work to ensure that the coffee trade works for everyone by connecting disadvantaged coffee farmers with more than a dozen mission-driven coffee companies—ones that are fully committed to Fair Trade—to bring great-tasting, fairly traded coffee to consumers like you.

Coffee Farmers

More than 100 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America depend on coffee farming for their livelihoods. Since the best coffee is grown at high altitudes in isolated mountainous regions, coffee farmers face formidable structural challenges. Their isolation means that they often lack the schools, health centers and water and sanitation systems they need to foster human development. It also means that they often lack other infrastructure like electricity, roads and telecommunications facilities they need to participate on fair terms in the global coffee market.

Fair Trade companies, like the ones that participate in the CRS Fair Trade Coffee project, work to change all this by building direct relationships with farmers based on the principles of fairness, mutual respect and long-term commitment.

Get Involved!

Just follow these four easy steps to become part of this inspiring network of right relationships:

- 1. Navigate** - Consult the CRS Fair Trade Coffee Map at www.crsfairtrade.org and identify a participating company near you.
- 2. Negotiate** - If you are buying coffee for your parish, office or school, call a coffee company in our partner network and ask them what kind of bulk discounts are available. Many will work with you to find a price that makes everyone happy.
- 3. Caffeinate** - Drink it at home. Give it as a gift. Serve and sell it after Mass and at other special events in your community. Convert your community to Fair Trade coffee.
- 4. Educate** - Tell your friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, dentist, the people you sit next to on planes and buses...you get the idea.

For more information about the CRS Fair Trade Coffee project and all the tools you need to help people in your community get the Fair Trade coffee buzz, visit us online at www.crsfairtrade.org.

Sabas Gómez Ochoa Coffee farmer – Nicaragua

Sabas Gómez Ochoa is nearly 80 years old and has been around coffee for as long as he can remember. Over the years, he has seen good times and bad and accumulated real wisdom along the way. His counsel is often sought by his peers and neighbors. Most of the time, Sabas is able to provide helpful information or help devise creative solutions to the problem at hand. But until he began working with Catholic Relief Services a few years ago to gain access to the U.S. Fair Trade market, there was one thing he didn't know: Where his coffee went after it left his community. He and his neighbors knew, of course, that their coffee found its way out of Nicaragua and into the cups of coffee drinkers in the United States, but how that happened was a mystery, even to someone as wise as Sabas.

Historically, small-scale farmers like Sabas have sold their coffee to local intermediaries, often people from their own communities, and never knew anything about how it is dried, threshed, sorted, shipped, roasted, packaged or sold. Through the CRS Fair Trade program, Sabas has come into direct contact for the first time with the people who buy and drink great coffee like his.

On several occasions, Sabas and his family have hosted the owners of companies that participate in the CRS Fair Trade Coffee project and the consumers who participate in it. In 2006, the cooperative to which Sabas belongs sold its coffee to these companies—the first time it has ever sold directly into the U.S. specialty coffee market. And while Sabas appreciates the business, it is the developing relationships that he cherishes most: “It gives us great joy to receive these visits. To make new friendships with people who care about us and the challenges we face.”

