



Ethiopia
TASTE OF ORIGINS



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The Cup of Excellence Coming to Ethiopia in 2020!

5 APRIL 2019, ADDIS ABABA — World-renowned coffee competition Cup of Excellence is coming to the country where coffee originated – Ethiopia – in March 2020. The competition will highlight the unique taste of Ethiopian coffee and stimulate new market opportunities for smallholder producers in Ethiopia.

This key event for the coffee industry is made possible through an ongoing partnership between the Alliance for Coffee Excellence, the Ethiopia Coffee and Tea Authority, and USAID's Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activity. The initiative has the full support and approval of Ethiopian government ministries and the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange.

"Buy-in across the country from trading houses, cooperatives, and coffee unions has been swift and positive," said Ian Chesterman, FTFF-VCA project director. "Prioritizing open collaboration between the private and public sectors from the start will help ensure the competition benefits all stakeholders, particularly our smallholder clients."

Smallholder farmers also recognize the opportunity the event gives them to showcase the unique taste and aroma of Ethiopian coffee.

"The competition finally came home, where the best natural coffee is produced," said producer Zenabu Alem. "I look forward to entering my coffee in the competition."

Coffee is believed to have been discovered in Ethiopia more than 1,200 years ago, and the country now boasts more than 6,000 varieties with 95 percent of coffee qualifying as organic. Ethiopia is the largest coffee producer in Africa and the fifth largest in the world, with average annual production exceeding 500,000 tons, representing a huge export potential.

Dr Adugna Debela, Director General of the Ethiopian Tea and Coffee Authority, agrees that the event will open doors for smallholders on the world stage, but adds it's also an enormous point of national pride for Ethiopian.

"Coffee is not just a cash crop for us. It's a historic crop, and part of who we are as Ethiopians...the competition is not just a promotional tool for the world market, but also an exciting event for Ethiopians."

Cup of Excellence is a competition for the highest quality coffee in any given country. It has been discovering exceptional coffees, rewarding growers, and creating markets for these coffees since 1999. The competition requires significant investment in staffing and resources and only works properly if all of the industry supports its mission.

"Nearly two decades after our founding, it has long been the dream to bring the Cup of Excellence to the birthplace of coffee. Ethiopia represents the quintessential specialty coffee origin and with our program operating in Ethiopia, we hope to further discover and reward smallholder farmers who are in need of market access via our competition and auction," said Darrin Daniel, Executive Director of the Alliance for Coffee Excellence.

USAID's Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activity is partnering with the Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority and Alliance for Coffee Excellence to bring the Cup of Excellence to Ethiopia.



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The Cup of Excellence Ethiopia will be officially launched during the Specialty Coffee Expo in Boston, MA, on April 12, 2019. Dr. Adugna Debela and Darrin Daniel will sign the official agreement committing to the 2020 competition.

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For more information, contact Seble Teweldebirhan (steweldebirhan@fintrac.com).

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