

# TEA & COFFEE

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## Tracing Organic Coffee Back to its Roots

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# NEW & NOTABLE

TEA & COFFEE REPORTS BREWING WORLDWIDE

## SCAA, The Event Draws Largest Int'l Crowds to Date, Ethiopia Shines

For the second consecutive year the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) held its annual expo in Seattle, Wash. This year, the 27<sup>th</sup> annual expo drew larger crowds from around the world and across all segments of the coffee industry.

The SCAA expo opened with a two-day Symposium, which this year focused on the effects of water—and lack of it—on coffee preparation and production, examining the impacts of water quality on drink preparation at points of consumption and the impact of drought at points of production, focusing particularly on Brazil.

Seattle-based Starbucks Coffee Co. was again the official host sponsor for the event, and this year attendees were invited to visit the new Reserve Roastery and Tasting Room to experience coffee's diversity of origins, roasts, and drink preparations, "bringing coffee to life in a way that has not been done before," explained Megan Adams during *Tea & Coffee's* tour of the facility. Ethiopia was recognized as the official portrait country, and the Event's opening ceremonies commenced with a love letter to Ethiopian coffees, a video montage of prominent roasters, buyers, Q graders, and baristas recognizing that Ethiopia, as the birthplace of coffee, today offers an increasingly exciting array of coffees that capture flavors not found at any other origin.

Among the honorees this year, the SCAA recognized Bill McAlpin of Hacienda La Minita with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his commitment to sustainability and supply chain innovation, Spencer Turer of Coffee Analysts for his Outstanding Contribution to the Association, Kevin Kuyers of Theta Ridge Coffee for Service to the Association, and the Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Union of Western Uganda for their sustainability initiatives empowering women to catalyze economic change in their communities.

The Coffee Quality Institute, Aliso Viejo, Calif., recognized Lindsey Bolger of Keurig Green Mountain, Waterbury, VT., with the CQI Leadership Medal of Merit. At the CQI Annual Luncheon, the Brazilian Specialty Coffee Association (BSCA) introduced its new brand concept, "Brazil: The Coffee Nation," focusing on Brazil's influential role as a consuming nation as well as the world's largest producer. In pursuit of higher



The SCAA held a wide array of origin coffee cuppings during the three-day expo.

### President

Robert M. Lockwood

### Publisher

Frederick A. Lockwood

### Executive Director

Rob Lockwood

### Director of Exhibitions

Frank B. Schuetze (Germany)

Tel: +49 30 645 7212

Fax: +49 30 6409 1350

E-mail: fbsch@t-online.de

### Trade Show and Marketing Director

Quentin Wright-McDuffie

### Circulation and Subscription Manager

Amanda Coyne

### Accountant

Roxanne Cordova-Melendez

### ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

Austria, France, Switzerland, Germany, United Kingdom

Robert M. Lockwood

Tel: +1-212-391-2060, ext. 109

E-mail: robert@teaandcoffee.net

Benelux, Indonesia, Italy, Portugal, Spain, South America

Frederick A. Lockwood

Tel: +1-212-391-2060, ext. 107

E-mail: f.lockwood@teaandcoffee.net

Caribbean, Central America, Greece, Scandinavia, Turkey

Rob Lockwood, Jr.

Tel: +1-212-391-2060, ext. 130

E-mail: rob@teaandcoffee.net

### Balkans, CIS

Andrey Alishayev

Tel: +1-212-391-2060, ext. 123

E-mail: a.alishayev@lockwoodpublications.com

### Africa, Asia

Kelly Hobbs

Tel: +1-212-832-9322

E-mail: k.hobbs@lockwoodpublications.com

### North America

Scott Rogers

Cel: +1-917-763-6478

E-mail: s.rogers@teaandcoffee.net

### TEA & COFFEE TRADE JOURNAL

3743 Crescent Street, 2nd Floor,

Long Island City, New York 11101, USA

Tel: +1-212-391-2060

Fax: +1-212-827-0945

Web Site: [www.teaandcoffee.net](http://www.teaandcoffee.net)



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quality specialty coffee, the BSCA is focusing on educating consumers and the industry about the different growing regions of the country.

For the first time the World Barista Competition was held in conjunction with the expo. Australian competitor Sasa Sestic won the title of World Barista Champion. While the world's most accomplished baristas gathered in the arena to watch the competition, producers, exporters, importers, equipment manufacturers, and roasters scoured the show floor to forge new relationships and discover the highest quality coffees to add to their portfolios and outlets for their specialty beans. Many stands hosted multiple cuppings per day, and dedicated cupping rooms were filled to capacity, with producers adding additional cuppings to accommodate demand. As specialty coffee claims a larger and larger percentage of marketshare, importers and roasters are eager to expand their specialty offerings, evident from bags of green samples that were claimed as soon as they were cupped.

The lecture sessions addressed topics ranging from retail management to production logistics. David Griswold of Sustainable Harvest was among panelists broaching the potential of specialty Robusta, citing the attractiveness of "two times greater yield per hectare than Arabica, combined with a chocolate viscosity and creamy mouth feel" of certain attentively grown and processed Robustas in regions like Karnataka, India.

Catering to the truly global audience of attendees, the session on costs of production compared production in Huila, Colombia to that of Burundi. Mark Lundy of the Center for International Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), located in Cali, Colombia, shared data on three categories of Colombian growers, while Ben Carlson of Long Miles Coffee presented the production logistics of East African Burundi. The disparity illustrated the challenge of determining an average that has a chance of accurately capturing the regional and national variations in the global activity of coffee production. Ongoing collaboration between private entities, NGOs, and the industry as a whole to gather data will help draft meaningful solutions.

The Santa Ana, Calif.-based SCAA's 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Event will be held in Atlanta, GA., April 14-17<sup>th</sup>, 2016.—RN

#### NCA Symposium Aimed to Enhance Coffee's Health Message

The NCA Symposium on March 11<sup>th</sup> kicked off this year's NCA Annual Convention that took place in Charleston, S.C., March 12-14<sup>th</sup> at the Charleston Place Hotel. The one-day Symposium, "Coffee and Health: Turning Message into Mindset," explored the substance, positioning and delivery of consumer messaging of scientific evidence linking coffee with health benefits.

Moderated by Bill Murray, president and CEO of the NCA, New York, the Symposium featured presentations by Peter Goggi, president of the Tea Association of the USA, and executives representing the U.S. Blueberry Council and the California Avocado Commission in the first panel discussion, followed by a session on the science behind coffee's health message that featured members of the NCA Scientific Advisory Group. The final session was an interactive discussion involving panelists from the



Photo courtesy of the NCA

Former NBC News Chief Medical Editor, Dr. Nancy Snyderman, gave the opening keynote address at the 2015 NCA Convention in March.

thought to be a "bad-for-you" food. All of these products successfully turned their images around through strategic marketing, promotional and public relations campaigns, resulting in growth in consumption and revenue.

Coffee is perhaps the most misunderstood of all consumable products—for all the good press it may receive, there's often much more unwarranted bad press. The goal of the Symposium was to convey the emerging health benefits associated with coffee and how to adapt and apply strategies employed by the tea, blueberry and avocado industries to successfully promote coffee's health message. The NCA will aggregate ideas generated from the Symposium to create a template for action on how to promote the coffee and health message.

The coffee and health science and messaging theme also resonated in the NCA Convention's opening keynote presentation by former NBC News Chief Medical Editor, Nancy Snyderman, MD, who noted that "coffee has been maligned because people think of it as a gateway drug to problems such as staying up late and jitters," but there is opportunity to change this mindset. The coffee and health topic was also covered in a general session on coffee science produced by the NCA Scientific Advisory Group.

The keynote speaker for the business luncheon was Todd Carmichael, CEO and Co-Founder of La Colombe Torrefaction, and host of *Dangerous Grounds*, who noted that "single serve is not our enemy, it is a prototype—we need to improve it. It's not going away but it's not being done right. [Current single-serve] is a good start; we will get there."

The 2016 NCA Annual Convention will take place March 17-19<sup>th</sup> in San Diego, Calif.—VLF

#### Starbucks Awards USD \$300,000 to Mercon's Foundation

Starbucks Coffee Co. selected the Seeds for Progress Foundation, founded by Mercon Coffee Group, to receive a grant towards their Digital Seeds program. This program aims to improve the quality of education in primary schools in the coffee growing communities of Nicaragua. It currently supports more than 6,000 children in 17 schools. The program is now receiving USD \$300,000 from the Starbucks Foundation for a three-year peri-

first two sessions and audience members.

Tea, blueberries and avocados, all, at some point, suffered from an image problem. Whether it was a misunderstood image, a mundane one or even a "bad reputation": tea—high in caffeine and primarily consumed by older consumers; blueberries—as a fruit, "good for you," but their powerful benefits were not known by most; avocados—always tasty, but long

thought to be a "bad-for-you" food. All of these products successfully turned their images around through strategic marketing, promotional and public relations campaigns, resulting in growth in consumption and revenue.

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