

TEA & COFFEE

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AFRICA: Rich in Crops and Culture

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Part VI in a Six-Part Series
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Achieving Optimal Extraction
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the Tanzania chapter of the IWCA. Her hope is that by bringing women together via the IWCA they will be able to network and gain confidence in their ability as leaders. "Indigo shares the vision of the IWCA, and it's gratifying to be able to do something concrete through our purchase of Finca Estate coffee to help further that vision," said Tallet. "The work that Faraji does in Tanzania to give women in coffee a larger voice is so important for change."

Campanile and Tallet also contacted Walker Coffee, Houston, Texas, their importers, to see if they could source the coffee from Faraji's farm. Thanks to the efforts of Johnson and Walker Coffee, Tallet and Campanile have purchased some of Faraji's coffee. It should arrive in the U.S. in February.

Unknown to Tallet and Campanile at the time they were trying to track down Fatima's coffee, was the fact that it came in second in the Taste of Harvest competition in Tanzania. As artisan roasters, quality is extremely important to Indigo Coffee and this recognition will be another factor they will highlight as they work with potential customers.

Faraji's coffee is usually sold through the Tanzanian auction and she does not know where it goes once it is sold. Who is roasting her coffee? Who are the final consumers who will enjoy the coffee that she and her family have grown? These questions usually go unanswered, but thanks to the efforts of the IWCA, she knows that some of her coffee will be enriching the lives of people in western Massachusetts.

This story is just one example of how the IWCA seeks to connect women "from seed to cup." For more information on the IWCA and its activities, please visit: www.womenin-coffee.org.—Margaret Swallow

Sintercafe: Epicenter of Int'l Diversity

In November, players from all sectors of the coffee world converged in San Jose, Costa Rica for the 26th annual Sintercafe conference.

In his introduction, Arnoldo Leiva Pachecho, president of Sintercafe, reflected that, "during this year, Peet's Coffee & Tea was sold, the coffee sub-market developed a fierce competition, and Honduras seems to be producing even more coffee." He cited one goal of the conference to be to take advantage of the international and occupational diversity of the attendees to "discuss and analyze these changes and trends."

In his keynote address, David Neumann, CEO, Neumann Group, noted the interaction between the business of coffee and political, economic and social developments across the producing and consuming world. He concluded that, "All in all, the future and the business of our product is quite challenging. To work towards it is not for the weak of heart. But the opportunities are much bigger than the threats."

Ric Rhinehart, executive director, the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) reported that "in 2011, just under 59 percent of the U.S. population identifies themselves as coffee consumers." This historically solid percentage echoed other presenters' measured optimistic outlook for the consumer patterns around coffee.

Doug Welsh, vp of the recently sold Peet's Coffee & Tea, spoke about how the art behind roasting specialty coffee is part of what makes it truly special. He reminded listeners that technology is just another a tool rather than replacement for expertise because "the computer cannot actually do the things that the human can do. The computer cannot see how the coffee is expanding, how is the color changing?"



Sintercafe featured a tour of Beneficio La Eva.

Senior commodity analyst, Keith Flury, of Rabobank International, discussed the market outlook for coffee in the wake of the 2011-12 price rally catalyzed by the significant reduction in Colombian supply. He reasoned that "the supply of coffee in 2012-13 has reached levels now that we haven't seen in almost a decade. This is significant because what we're seeing now is a price reaction to this supply increase."

Sintercafe culminated with a field trip to Beneficio La Eva and processing mill about an hour outside the city. Around 50 attendees elected to follow coffee back to its source, and many participated in the hands-on experience of picking ripe cherries right off the trees.

Conference attendees enjoyed beverages prepared by some of the country's most talented baristas and savored the finest coffee offered by Costa Rica, which Welsh recognized as, "the most organized coffee producing country in the world."—Rachel Northrop

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Passion Meets Science at ASIC

Coffee exists at the confluence of seemingly diverse passions; it provides a practical playground for scientific fields as seemingly disparate as gene sequencing and milk foam preparation. Coffee marries the passion of all areas of science into a relentless pursuit—from seed to cup—to better understand the libation that has seduced businessmen, politicians, religious leaders and drinkers for millennia.

At November's 24th meeting of the Association for Science and Information on Coffee (ASIC) in San Jose, Costa Rica, all branches of science presented new research and findings. Geneticists revealed new understandings of sequencing coffee DNA, and agronomists reported on new hybrids and adaptive varieties of both Robusta and

an urgency. It is even more urgent if we consider the speed at which the climate is changing. We really need to start implementing [new practices] fast."

Passion for innovating ways to ensure the sustainability of coffee as a livelihood for millions and as an international industry permeated presentations by scientists from across the globe, but taste, the fundamental passion that lead coffee to its status as the world's second most valuable commodity, consistently bubbled to the surface of conversation.

Master blenders and micro roasters alike attended the conference to discuss perhaps the most consumer-relevant side of coffee science: the chemistry and perception of taste. Near obsessive inquiry is rampant at every stage of coffee planting, propagation and

heavily media-influenced campaign of Proposition 37 was a close vote, 51.5 percent to 48.5 percent, as reported by the California Secretary of State. But in the end, the voters' voice was clear: No to Proposition 37.

Large food industry leaders like Monsanto and Hershey were the main advocates for voting no on this proposition. Calling it a "deceptive food labeling campaign," the 'no team' argued that the bill was vague and inconsistent. The \$46 million dollar media campaign emphasized that voting yes on this bill could result in higher grocery bills and potential lawsuits against farmers and the food manufacturers. Other inconsistencies in the bill included that the onus for labeling would fall on the retailers not the manufacturers. The "no" team was not necessarily against informing the public but emphasized that Prop 37 was not the right bill to do this. For these individuals, which included several large players in the food industry the no vote was a victory.

So what now?

According to the supporters of Prop 37, this ballot was simply the beginning. In fact, some are stating that Prop 37 was a victory, even though the end result was no. Why? Prop 37 increased awareness of what is in the food in North America. In fact, the support and opposition for this proposition was nation wide. "Today is not the end of our campaign to secure our fundamental right to know what's in our food," stated an email from the Prop 37 campaign to supporters. "It is a strong beginning."—AMH

Lessons in SM at NCA Coffee Summit

Perhaps the strongest takeaway from the NCA's second annual Coffee Summit in Philadelphia in October was the warning not to ignore social media. Two of the four key educational sessions focused on social media.

In "Getting Engaged: How Technology is Changing the Conversation with Customers," Paul Friel, CEO of Saxby's Coffee, Broomall, Pa., talked about how today's technologies are reshaping the way businesses and consumers interact. He noted, "Social media is a game changer." It has become the leading avenue for consumers to interact with companies and share their opinions about and experiences



Arabica that demonstrate resistance to drought, pests, and diseases.

These new and more intimate understandings of the coffee plant will become increasingly important as the fragile crop continues to face the mounting difficulties of adapting to climate changes across all coffee growing regions of the world.

In a provocative presentation around coffee and climate, researcher Dr. Peter Baker of the UK's Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International bluntly questioned, "Who's setting the standards for the standards setters?" He boldly argued that certifications as they currently exist are meaningless measures of localized approaches to a problem that warrants a globalized, systems thinking solution. (See *Straight from the Cup* for more on Dr. Baker's presentation.)

ASIC president Andrea Illy translated Baker's reproach into an industry wide call to action, reiterating that, "climate change has been confirmed to be

consumption, but those who analyze flavor exude an excited passion and almost religious awe at how coffee possesses the continued capacity to enchant, delight, and surprise even the most discriminating palates.

Health researchers revealed that for those who passionately consume coffee, there might be more to love. Studies unveiled at ASIC suggest that regular coffee intake may have a protective effect against various cancers, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and even Type 2 Diabetes.

Attendees left this meeting of the coffee minds fueled to continue investigating ways to make coffee an even better crop, commodity, and beloved consumer beverage for the people who interact with it at every stage.—RN

Prop 37 Fails to Pass in California

Mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods will not be required in California: at least for the moment. The