



## Coffee Update - Coffee Growers Find Support Through Green Parrot Coffee and IHCAFE

IHCAFE - the Honduran Institute for Coffee has long recognized the enormous disparity between the price paid to coffee producers versus the price paid by coffee roasters and consumers in the United States and Europe. Generally speaking, producers are paid less than half of the actual market value when they sell their coffee to the intermediaries or export houses. For example, coffee on the NYBOT so far this year reached nearly \$1.40 per pound while producers in Honduras continued to receive a mere \$0.65 per pound. Honduras, in the past, has been severely punished for its typically low coffee quality. Coffee growers have little incentive to produce a high quality product because premium beans and specialty coffees are thrown in with all of the rest of standard and sub-standard coffees. Green Parrot Coffee was created with the idea of offering fair trade prices for specialty coffees grown in the area while at the same time increasing the daily wages of the field workers. This year, we asked for assistance from IHCAFE in obtaining permission to package and ship strictly high grown and "fantasy" premium specialty coffees directly to small roasting houses and coffee shops. Not only did IHCAFE support the project by issuing

the necessary permissions for coffee exportation, it has placed its cupping and classifying facilities at our disposal. This year, a sample of coffee will be obtained from every farm in the clinic's service area. The coffee from each plantation will be classified and issued a certification. The Institute is also supplying personnel in the form of agronomists and other specialists who will measure the altitudes of each farm and confirm the varieties of coffee being cultivated. Once the farms producing the highest quality coffee in the area are identified, Green Parrot Coffee will begin exporting premium green coffee for sale in the United States.



**More than 110 coffee producers have attended IHCAFE meetings at Lisa's home to discuss strategies for increased coffee production and quality improvement. IHCAFE provides technical assistance free of charge to coffee producers in Honduras**

## African Mahogany and Solar Dryers - New Options to Increase Revenue



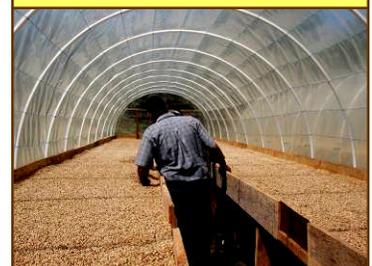
Taking advantage of IHCAFE's offer to assist local coffee producers, a field trip

was organized to visit an experimental farm funded by the Institute. Coffee farmers were given a one day seminar regarding the cultivation of African mahogany trees which are fast growing, disease resistant and provide optimal shade conditions for coffee farms. It takes approximately eighteen years for the trees to reach harvest heights and

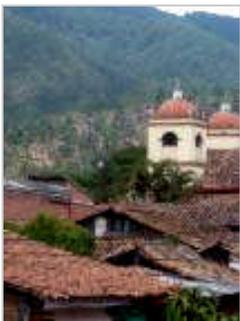
girth. The wood is a valuable resource and could provide significant additional income to coffee farmers. **Solar dryers** are now being implemented for the drying of coffee instead of traditional vertical dryers and cement patios which cause physical damage to the bean's appearance. IHCAFE now has several different designs in place at the experimental farm. They will provide blue prints and technical assistance for their construction should the coffee producer desire. There are even funds available to help with the purchase of construction materials which is around \$300.00 per unit. Each dryer can effectively dry 1,200 pounds of coffee in three days.



**Solar dryers are a perfect, low-cost option for the small coffee producer.**



## Green Parrot Coffee Increases Distribution in Honduras



Green Parrot Coffee can now be found in many gift shops and tourist plazas throughout Honduras. Valley of the Angels is an

artisan community and tourist hot-spot about forty-five minutes away from the Honduran capitol, Tegucigalpa. The owner of a high end gift shop **Rincon del Arte** was impressed with the quality of the coffee and the purpose of the project enough to help with distribution. He is now

using Green Parrot exclusively in his gift shop as well as his coffee bar. He has also helped to place our coffee in several gift shops in Tegucigalpa, the airports and the large City Mall in San Pedro Sula. The large tourist plaza Betania in Siguatepeque has also agreed to sell Green Parrot Coffee.

The coffee is displayed with a coffee brochure to help explain the project's purpose. The owners of **Las Casas del Sol**, high end gift shops in San Pedro Sula and Tela, have commented when potential clients pick up the brochure, they tend to purchase the coffee even

though there are more economical coffees of comparable quality displayed next to Green Parrot. Some of our most faithful clients who order via internet were first exposed to our coffee in Honduras.

As this small development project continues to grow, self-sufficiency for the Fellow Man project and the people we serve seems to be a real possibility with the sale of each pound of coffee.

Thank you to all of those who are helping us work toward this goal!



## Low Coffee Yields and a Late Harvest Worries for Field Workers

Last year's harvest was much smaller than the year before. It was hard for the average field worker to make ends meet as they struggled through the long months between the last harvest and this year's harvest. During the months of May and June the workers began to murmur about the lack of rain and its effects on this fall's coffee harvest. As the fields flowered, the coffee cherries seemed to be unusually small and slow to ripen. For those living in the mountains around Buenos Aires, harvest is generally in full swing by mid-November. This year, harvest has everyone worried, most especially those who labor in the fields. The cherries are very small due to the effects of an extended dry season. This makes it very difficult for harvesters to fill their gallon buckets. Because the workers are usually paid by the gallon, their overall pay has been greatly reduced. Also, the coffee

cherries have been slow to mature, with an uneven ripening across the coffee fields. Normally, at the height of the harvest, entire branches of the coffee plants are bright red. On a good day, a grown man might pick eight to ten gallons of ripe coffee. This year, with luck the experienced workers are able to pick two and a half gallons. Owners of the coffee farms have gathered to discuss the best way to handle the situation. Many of us have decided to pay a daily wage to ensure the workers are adequately compensated for a fair day's work. Since basic grains such as corn, rice and beans have nearly doubled in price in the last two months, it is very important that workers receive a living wage. This makes the problem of low prices paid at the export house, especially worrisome. This year, many producers are concerned the price of coffee may barely cover the cost of field labor and maintenance.



*Here a young man harvests coffee. Notice the ripe cherries are far and few between. This combined with the small size makes earning enough money to feed the family difficult at best.*