

PRODUCER PROFILE



PRODUCER NAME: Cooperativa Café Timor (CCT)

PRODUCTS: Coffee

COUNTRY: East Timor

FLO ID 930

Fairtrade certified since 2012

Number of members 21,558



©Google maps

INTRODUCTION

The Cooperativa Café Timor or CCT is the only Fairtrade organization producing coffee in East Timor. It is based in the districts of Ermera, Ainaro, Aileu, Manufafi and Liquica. Members of this cooperative are traditional small-scale farmers.

Timorese people have suffered violent occupation by Indonesia, which has reduced much of the country to ruins and left a legacy of instability and poverty. As a result CCT members are very poor; there is high infant mortality due to insufficient health services, and 50% of the adult population is illiterate. There are very few jobs in East Timor. CCT is a major employer and plays a significant role in the country's development. The cooperative works closely with international organizations to support producers.



Jose Malik is a member of CCT who has benefitted from being part of an organized network of coffee producers. Having access to Fairtrade markets has supported Mr. Malik to produce high quality coffee. ©USAID

COFFEE GROWING AND PROCESSING

For many members, coffee is the only household income. Crops such as rice, corn, cassava, beans, fruit and spices are also produced alongside coffee for household consumption.

During the harvest season, the producers pick the ripe cherries. The coffee is harvested by families or through labour exchanges with neighbours. Many farms are not accessible by vehicles so producers carry their coffee to the roadside where CCT picks up the harvest in trucks. CCT have facilities to process the coffee from start to finish. The cooperative transports the cherries to the washing station. The cherries are poured into water tanks – if the cherry floats then it is poor quality and is removed. The cherries are then pulped to remove the fruit and reveal the bean inside. The beans are fermented, washed and dried. At this point, the coffee is called 'parchment'. The parchment is then sorted and sent to the milling factory for the final stage of preparation to become 'green beans'. CCT's green beans are exported around the world.

COFFEE PROFILE

Altitude 750 – 1,500m

Smallholders On average just over 1 hectare per farmer is dedicated to coffee

Total area of production 24,690 ha

Growing practices 100% organic

Coffee variety Arabica and Robusta: Hybrid de Timor

Coffee quality 1st grade: described as having a rich and complex earthy flavour, subtle acidity and a long chocolaty finish.

Harvest May – September

Other certifications Control Union Certifications (Organic), CAFÉ Practices (Starbucks)

PRODUCER PROFILE



BENEFITS OF FAIRTRADE

The cooperative has a General Assembly made up of delegates from the 444 community groups. The use of the Fairtrade Premium is decided at the annual General Assembly meeting.

HEALTH

The members of CCT see health care as their number one priority. In recent years, the Fairtrade Premium has been used for urgently needed health services. It has covered the costs of doctors and nurses, transport to remote villages, medicine and treatment, and equipment. The health clinics and mobile clinics are free for members and staff of the cooperative, as well as the wider rural community.

ECONOMIC: DIVERSIFICATION OF INCOME

With support from international organizations such as USAID, CCT has ventured into diversifying its operations. They hope to reduce their dependency on coffee and increase the benefits to those members who are only able to cultivate a small amount of coffee. The cooperative has successfully launched projects on organic production of vanilla and cloves and rearing cattle, and an agroforestry project which produces timber for construction and firewood.

Challenges

- East Timor as a whole faces many problems, which CCT is well-placed to tackle. However, the cooperative would benefit from support to improve management skills, capacity of staff and the knowledge of Fairtrade among producers.
- There is an ongoing need to improve infrastructure: there is limited access to education, water supply and roads.
- Members would like to support women's programs so they can start small businesses using skills such as embroidery.
- Members have expressed the need for agricultural tools such as grass cutters in order to increase quality and productivity. Timorese, and in particular CCT's, coffee is in high demand but CCT are currently working to their maximum capacity. They will need to increase production by encouraging more members and better productivity at farm level.
- Climate change is a challenge faced by CCT and its members. The volume of green bean produced by CCT has mainly varied over time due to weather conditions. The political situation and related safety issues also affects the harvest. CCT would benefit from support to improve the sustainability of their supply.



Healthcare centre funded by the Fairtrade Premium. ©Fairtrade Australia



Pictured above is one of the clinics set up using the Fairtrade Premium. ©Fair Trade USA

'The availability of professional health care services in our village has saved the lives of many of our children and their mothers.'

Mr. Duarte do Carno, community member

'Free health care for my family thanks to Fairtrade is very comforting to those of us who live in isolated areas, especially the children's immunization program.'

Mrs. Katerina Alves, community member

