

Rwanda



80% of the members of Dukunde Kawa Cooperative are women. With the help of the cooperative's technical and financial assistance, they produce this Fully Washed FTO coffee that's sweet and bursting with citrus, melon and tropical fruit.

COFFEE GRADE:

Musasa Fully Washed FTO

FARM/COOP/STATION:

Dukunde Kawa Cooperative

VARIETAL:

Bourbon

PROCESSING:

Fully washed

ALTITUDE:

1,700 to 2,000 meters above sea level

OWNER:

2,100+ farmers with Dukunde Kawa Cooperative

SUBREGION/TOWN:

Gakenke

REGION:

Northern Province

FARM SIZE:

200 to 300 trees on average

BAG SIZE:

60kg GrainPro

CERTIFICATIONS:

FTO

HARVEST MONTHS:

Offer March - June

About This Coffee

The Dukunde Kawa Cooperative has 4 washing stations supporting more than 2,100 members, 80% of whom are women. In Kinyarwanda, the local language, Dukunde Kawa means "let's love coffee."

The cooperative is an important employer and support system for communities. Because most farmers have small plots—coffee trees are often intercropped with food crops in a

family's back garden—it is imperative to maximize the value of their coffee. Washing stations, like those run by Dukunde Kawa Cooperative, give smallholders an opportunity to combine their lots and use high quality processing methods to get higher prices per kilogram of coffee. Dukunde Kawa also offers basket weaving projects, access to grain mills, loans to producers to pay school fees and medical expenses, a milk pasteurization facility and agricultural training.

Dukunde Kawa Cooperative was established in 2000 with help from USAID's SPREAD, a program dedicated to developing specialty coffee in Rwanda. The cooperative built its first washing station, Ruli, in 2003. In 2004, the cooperative gained Fairtrade certification. The next year, in 2005, they were able to build their second washing station, Mblima, using profits from the first station. The cooperative's members have been fully organic-certified since 2014. The washing station where this coffee was processed, Musasa, is Dukunde Kawa's largest washing station.

Harvest & Post-Harvest

Cherries are selectively handpicked and pulped in mechanical pulper with a density grader that divides coffee into 3 grades by weight. Following pulping, the coffee is fermented for about 12 hours, and then washed through a flotation channel and graded according to density. Parchment is soaked for a further 18 to 24 hours to stabilize moisture content.

To ensure that only the best coffees makes it into their lots, hand sorting occurs twice at Dukunde Kawa stations. First, workers look over wet parchment at covered pre-drying tables and remove any defective beans. Many defects are easier to spot when parchment is wet, so pre-drying tables are covered to slow drying to enable workers to be more thorough. Workers intensively inspect wet parchment for 6 hours before transferring parchment to the drying tables. Parchment is inspected again at the drying tables as it dries.

Parchment takes approximately 14 days to dry. In addition to inspecting for visual defects, workers turn drying parchment regularly to ensure even drying. They also cover parchment to protect it from the midday sun and any rain.

Dry parchment is stored in the cooperative warehouse before it is sent to Kigali for final dry-milling and hand sorting at the cooperatives dry mill.

Coffee in Rwanda

Despite its turbulent history, today Rwanda is one of the specialty coffee world's darlings – for good reason! Our sister company in Rwanda does an amazing job of bringing the best that Rwanda has to offer to roasters around the world.

German missionaries and settlers brought coffee to Rwanda in the early 1900s. Large scale coffee production was established during the 1930 & 1940s by the Belgian colonial

government. Coffee production continued after the Belgian colonists left. By 1970, coffee had become the single largest export in Rwanda and accounted for 70% of total export revenue. Coffee was considered so valuable that, beginning in 1973, it was illegal to tear coffee trees out of the ground.

Between 1989 and 1993, the breakdown of the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) caused the global price to plummet. The Rwandan government and economy took a hard hit from low global coffee prices. The 1994 genocide and its aftermath led to a complete collapse of coffee exports and vital USD revenue, but the incredible resilience of the Rwandan people is evident in the way the economy and stability have recovered since then.

Modern Rwanda is considered one of the most stable countries in the region. Since 2003, its economy has grown by 7-8% per year and coffee production has played a key role in this economic growth. Coffee has also played a role in Rwanda's significant advancements towards gender equality. New initiatives that cater to women and focus on helping them equip themselves with the tools and knowledge for farming have been changing the way women view themselves and interact with the world around them.

Today, smallholders propel the industry in Rwanda forward. The country doesn't have any large estates. Most coffee is grown by the 400,000+ smallholders, who own less than a quarter of a hectare. The majority of Rwanda's coffee production is Arabica. Bourbon variety plants comprise 95% of all coffee trees cultivated in Rwanda.

