



Guatemala

Asoproguate Acatenango FW Organic

Around 150 smallholder farmers from Acatenango, Coban, and San Martin are a part of the Asoproguate cooperative. The cooperative aims to give participating farmers access to the larger international coffee market. By gaining access, smaller farmers have the opportunity to grow their businesses.

Details

COFFEE GRADE:

FW SHB EP

FARM/COOP/STATION:

Various smallholder farms

VARIETAL:

Bourbon, Catuaí, Caturra

PROCESSING:

Fully washed

ALTITUDE:

1,800 to 2,100 metres above sea level

OWNER:

Various members of Asoproguate Cooperative

SUBREGION/TOWN:

San Martín Jilotepeque

REGION:

Acatenango, Chimaltenango

FARM SIZE:

<5 hectares on average

BAG SIZE:

69kg GrainPro

CERTIFICATIONS:

Organic

HARVEST MONTHS:

November - April

About This Coffee

Asoproguate members in Acatenango produce around 1,000 bags of coffee per year. The two partners in Coban, Seacal and San Cristobal, produce 1,650 and 1,375 bags respectively. The cooperative aims to establish fair trade for Guatemalan coffee growers.

Fifteen “inspectors” trained by Asoproguate’s head agronomist travel within the Coban, San Martin and Acatenango regions in Guatemala conducting trainings for farmers. Inspectors give 14 to 16 workshops per year. Workshops mainly help farmers in achieving and up-keeping their FTO certifications but they also support farmers in starting side businesses such as shampoo and clothing lines. Inspectors will also bring fertilizers to producers and collect cherries.

For most of the year, Aproguate’s operatives are governed collectively by eight farmer representatives, the lead agronomist and the leader of Asoproguate. Four to five representatives from each community meet once per year to vote on how to allocate the cooperative’s Fairtrade premium. There are approximately 260 members present and voting during this assembly.

Harvest & Post-Harvest

Asoproguate members selectively hand harvest their own cherry during the harvest season. Most rely on their immediate family to help with this work, as farm sizes are small. The cooperative then collects cherry from producers. After collection, cooperatives pulp and ferment coffee at their wet mills. Then, parchment is washed in clean water and laid to dry. Asoproguate's partner, Dinamica, dry mills and exports the beans.

Coffee in Guatemala

Guatemala boasts a variety of growing regions and conditions that produce spectacular coffees. Today, the country is revered as a producer of some of the most flavorful and nuanced cups worldwide. We are proud to work with several exceptional in-country partners to bring these coffees to market.

The Guatemalan coffee industry experienced a major setback with the 2010 appearance of Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) in Latin America. The epidemic peaked in severity in 2012, and though CLR continues to affect some farms, Guatemala continues to produce high-quality, record-breaking coffees. In 2017, new and varied processing methods pushed prices at the Guatemalan Cup of Excellence contest to record highs.

The quality of coffee being produced in Guatemala is increasing, overall, due to the diversity of the industry's producers. There are more and more small holder farmers producing exceptional coffee at high altitudes. Cooperatives are becoming more appealing to so many smallholders because they often offer farmers financing and other support for improving their farming and processing and are frequently able to offer higher prices for cherry than middlemen. Many cooperatives have initiated quality improvement training for farmer members and are becoming more adept at helping members market their coffee as specialty.

