

## **COOCAFE - Gerardo Arias Camacho**



COOCAFE is a secondary coffee cooperative in Costa Rica that has 9 member cooperatives. In all there are approximately 3,500 members of the affiliated cooperatives. Since they began in 1988, Coocafe has sold coffee to the Fairtrade market. Thanks to Fairtrade, the organization has gotten stronger and now looks to the future with optimism despite the fact the coffee prices on the conventional market continue to suffer from a prolonged period of crisis. They are one of the longest standing producer groups involved with Fairtrade and have gained significant benefits as a result. The Fairtrade premium alone generates US\$30,000 in extra income each year.

COOCAFE and their 9 affiliated cooperatives sell close to 30 thousand quintales (100lbs of green coffee) to the Fairtrade market each year. They have also opened up links to export roasted coffee and other products like macadamia nuts, and yuca chips. This work producers, cooperatives and Coocafe to diversify their products counts on the support of Fairtrade. They are one of the longest standing producer groups involved with Fairtrade and have gained significant benefits as a result. The Fairtrade premium alone generates US\$30,000 in extra income each year.

In the end the objective of Fairtrade is to provide small rural producers with a better life and assure a better future for their children and families. This implies not only improving their income but also worrying about protecting the environment, assuring that producers and their families have access to basic services like health, education, food and potable water.

### **Coopelano Bonito**

**Gerardo Arias Camacho is a coffee farmer with just 5 hectares of land under coffee production. He is a member of the Coopelano Bonito Cooperative.**

More than 500 coffee producing families work on their small parcels of land, growing coffee in an environmentally friendly way, using organic soil for example. Coopellano Bonito is committed to protecting the environment, investing in the social well-being of its members, and of course, producing a high quality coffee.

Coopellano Bonito is located at an average altitude of 1500 metres above sea level high in the mountains of Tarrazu which include the communities of Santa Juana, Santa Rosa, San Miguel, San Francisco, La Trinidad, Bajos de Parrita, Llano Bonito Centro, San Juan, San Luis, Cementario, and San Gabriel. More than 500 producers belong to the co-operative.

The origin of Coopellano Bonito dates back to January 12, 1972, when 189 small coffee producers from the district of Llano Bonito de Leon Cortes united in a co-operative. They united out of necessity because of social and economic problems caused by their distance to the city and by lack of communication infrastructure. Before Coopellano Bonito, producers suffered exploitation at the hands of private mills that would buy their coffee for exceptionally low prices.