

PRODUCER PROFILE



Name: Cooperativa Mista Paraguaçu (COOMAP)

Products: Coffee

Country: Brazil

FLO ID 31509

Fairtrade certified since 2014

Number of members 672



Introduction

Cooperativa Mista Paraguaçu (COOMAP) is 1st grade cooperative group based in the Paraguaçu municipality of Minas Gerais state in south-eastern Brazil. The cooperative was originally founded in 1957 by 715 producers, who united to commercialize their coffee together. Since those early years the cooperative has grown steadily and is now a thriving professional business with technical and commercial departments. They were Fairtrade certified in 2014.

COOMAP now has 672 members, 8% of whom are women. The cooperative covers the municipalities of Paraguaçu, Alfenas, Machado, and Varginha. It is organised through 11 rural groups supporting hundreds of producers and their families across the region. COOMAP's mission is to promote the economic, social and environmental development of the region. They are committed to improving the lives of their members by cultivating high quality coffee in a sustainable manner.



COOMAP members posing after completing their water source protection project. ©COOMAP

Coffee growing and processing

COOMAP is based in Paraguaçu, a mild, rainy region famed for its coffee production. Coffee is the main industry in this part of Brazil and accounts for more than 80% of its agricultural output. The favourable climate and altitude create ideal conditions for cultivating high quality coffees.

Producers pick ripe coffee cherries and then deliver them to the cooperative's warehouses. The cherries are processed centrally, and then taken to be tested, graded and sorted. COOMAP owns a cupping laboratory and employs 3 professional graders trained by the renowned Coffee Quality Institute. All of the cooperative's coffee samples are classified, cupped and recorded on a computerised system. Finally, the finished product is packed and sent for international export.

Coffee profile

Altitude 800-1,050m

Smallholders 27 ha on average

Total area under production 5,515 ha

Coffee variety Arabica: Mundo Novo, Catuai

Harvest May - September

Other certifications UTZ, 4C, CONAB

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Benefits of Fairtrade

COOMAP's General Assembly is the cooperative's highest decision-making body and meets at least once a year. It is made up of all of the cooperative's members. There is also a board of directors with 5 democratically elected members who serve for 4 year terms. The cooperative has a strong organizational structure and is made up of 4 professional departments – technical, commercial, coffee and certification.

Quality, Productivity and Training

The cooperative has a technical department and employs 6 agronomic technicians. Their purpose is to help producers increase coffee productivity and quality, and they support members from the planting process through to post-harvest care. Members have been trained in water management, Fairtrade standards and farming techniques.

Women and Youth

Thanks to the Fairtrade premium, COOMAP are able to offer a free 3 year English course for the children and grandchildren of members. In March 2017 the cooperative held its first "Women's Meeting", set up solely to encourage the empowerment of the organization's female members.

Social and Health

Premium funds have been invested in a number of social and health projects for producers. These include health awareness classes, first aid training for members living in rural areas, and a regular 'Health Fair' for producers. Other social initiatives include economic and nutritional support projects for vulnerable groups such as children and elderly people living in the area.

Water

COOMAP has brought drinking water to over 600 families in the local area by installing filters, septic tanks and chlorinators. They have also funded a project to protect water sources on members' farms. Natural barriers have been installed and native trees planted to prevent contamination of the water supply.



Some of the cooperative's producers with their ripe coffee cherries. ©COOMAP



COOMAP's first 'Women's Meeting', which took place in March 2017. ©COOMAP

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