

international agro consulting

# Coffee Harvest Evaluation in Ranquitte, Haiti.

## 2nd Report

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## **Objective of Ranquitte Visit**

- **Review completed harvest**
- **Check on steps in processing**
- **Cupping analysis of processed samples**
- **Review strategy towards improvement of local coffee growing**
- **Present Report of Findings**

## Summary

The completed harvest was successful as far as processing steps are concerned. The processing facility performed as planned. The cupping analysis confirmed a potential for a good full bodied coffee.

The coffee growing in Ranquitte and Haiti has a long tradition dating to the 17 century. Currently the coffee growing is opportunistic and not really cultivated. If there is coffee it will probably be harvested. If there is no coffee then it is left as is. Coffee is grown in ravines and not really cultivated. Spacing, pruning, scheduled maintenance etc. are not really known or followed.

The quantities processed at Eco Café this year are below the envisioned target. The explanations are manifold such as;

- Late start in making known that EcoCafe is buying coffee
- some resistance in selling cherry coffee and not knowing the conversion value from cherry to “pile” coffee
- It might have been thought by the local producers that the price for cherry was less then what they could sell pile coffee at the market
- The inability to convert form the local mamit measure to pounds and not trusting the conversion
- Inability to deliver piked coffee the same day for processing (lack of transport)
- Resistance to selling only red coffee to EcoCafe. Some producers preferred to sell mixed product of under ripe green coffee with red ripe cherries

Good communication with the community is essential to explain these inaccuracies and teach that selling red cherry to EcoCafe brings a significant higher price then selling pile coffee at the market. The transportation question needs to be addressed as well. As a whole, better communication with the potential suppliers will be essential to improve next year’s harvest.

Some structural management issues needed to be addressed as well which will help with communication and overall management.

In my opinion a coffee growing and processing enterprise is possible in Ranquitte because of the groundwork and goodwill instituted by Christian Flight International and Eco Café Haiti. The other important factor is the coffee quality which is good. The infrastructure is in place now and the local management team has to “kick in” to implement what is necessary to make this coffee project a success.

In my mind the great question will be of whether or not the local management will take ownership of this enterprise or if they will treat it as a “meal ticket” to make wages and keep it going for that purpose. You have to approach this enterprise form a missionary standpoint however local leadership will be essential in the implementation. This transition will not be easy.

## Conclusion

- Based on cupping results from the area it seems possible to produce a “Specialty Coffee” that has the ability to gain a specialty status; with higher than world pricing (NYC price).
- The ability of the project to raise funds from an existing donor community makes this development possible.
- The past and present effort by Christian Flight International and Eco Cafee Haiti are critical in community relations. Long standing positive community interaction makes this project a possibility.
- Incremental development based on actual growth will help to keep the investment at reasonable levels.
- Revitalizing coffee growing with a managed approach is necessary for growth and sustainability.
- Shortcuts in the production of specialty coffee have to be avoided and all efforts have to focus on quality.
- Integrating a roasting facility in the US with targeted marketing towards “faith based” communities would make financial sense.
- There is risk in this project but it appears manageable for the above reasons.